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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the new Independent Film and Video Monthly. *Over the past year, you might have noticed a shift in editorial content: We've introduced regional spotlights, which will appear two to three times per year; our expanded profile section, "Talking Heads," now runs almost every month; we're devoting more space to timely issues and practical information; and we're making sure our articles are relevant and readable.*

The Independent's *evolution continues with this month's redesign. Our glossy cover grants the magazine entree into a greater number of newsstands and bookstores. And the interior design gives added visual punch to our articles. Altogether, we hope the package is as exciting as the independent media field it covers.*

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Association of Independent Video and Film (AIVF), which copublishes The Independent *together with the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF). We'll be devoting our June 1994 issue to a look at the association's—and the field's—past 20 years. But to kick off 1994, we thought we'd look to the future, examining a topic that will affect independents for the next decade or two: interactive communications — including both the production of interactive media and the new interactive delivery systems.*

In putting together this month's issue, we utilized a variety of digital communications tools. Several articles were faxed to our office, requiring a typist to input them the old-fashioned way. Others were received by modem. Still others came—for the first time at this magazine—via email (aivf@tmn.com). None came by U.S. postal snail mail. Many of our photographs also arrived on computer disk, in TIFF or EPS files.

While high-tech communications can make life easier, so too can they wreak havoc when systems break down. Call them what you will—demons, poltergeists, or ghosts in the machine—they are a major nuisance. While working on this issue, production ground to a halt when both modem phone lines went dead and our brand new fax/modem broke; editing was delayed when three emailed articles were stalled at an entryway for days; and confusion reigned when our modem, set up to automatically dial our art director, developed a mind of its own and steered the calls to some poor stranger, who in turn must have been mystified by all of the hang-up calls. A neighbor down the hall from AIVF gave us as good an explanation as any for all the technological mishaps: "Mercury is in retrograde until November 15," he announced, "so all communications will be difficult until then."

Now that the planets are no longer conspiring against us, we hope that you readers will take the opportunity to communicate with us and one another about the topics raised in this issue. We'll be meeting online to discuss the future of independents in the new communications environment. You'll find us on America Online under "Abbate" during January and February. See you there!

PATRICIA THOMSON *editor* | RUBY LERNER *publisher* | MICHELE SHAPIRO *managing editor*

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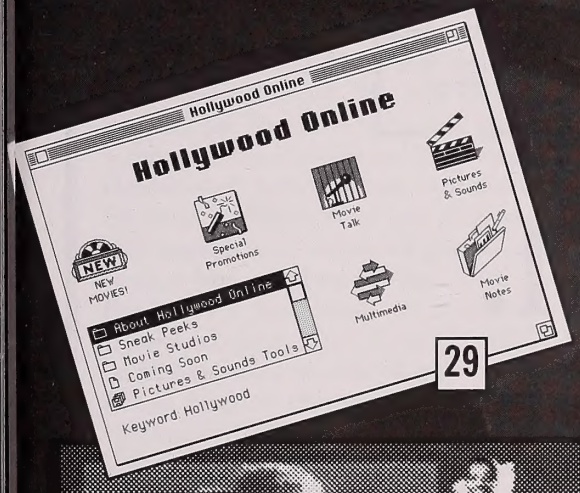
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A SPECIAL REPORT

Independents and Interactive Media





COVER: As a relatively unexplored medium, interactive multimedia affords independent makers the opportunity to create new languages and structural possibilities. The 3-D animated dream sequence from the virtual-reality piece *Archeology of a Mother Tongue* by Toni Dove and Michael Mackenzie (pictured) is one creative work that Barbara Bliss Osborn discusses in her feature "Write on the Money," which explores writing nonlinear narrative for interactive Media. Also in this issue, Luke Matthew Hones and Patricia Thomson explore the Internet and Clay Gordon delivers the low-down on interactive delivery systems.

Cover photo courtesy
Toni Dove and Michael MacKenzie.

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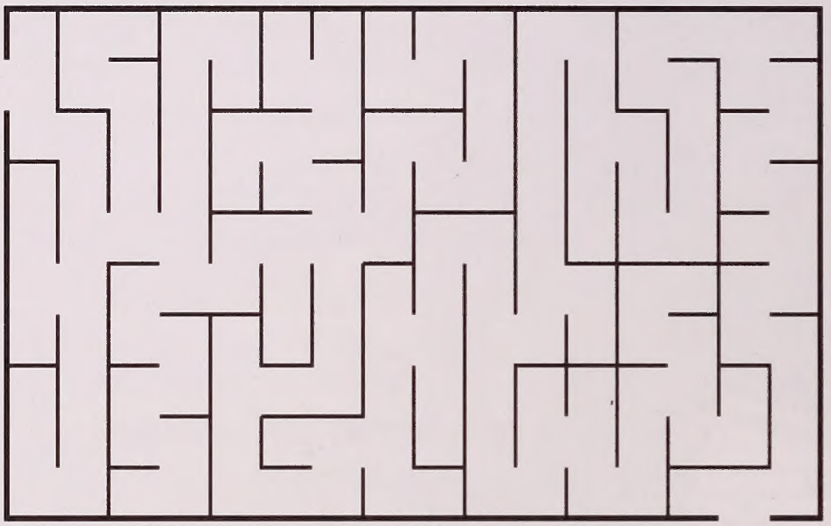
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HOLLYWOOD SHUFFLE

L.A.C.E. & FILMFORUM leave Downtown for Tinseltown



Maya Deren's Meshes in the Afternoon will be screened in Los Angeles at FILMFORUM's 8-week festival, "Scratching at the Belly of the Beast: Cutting Edge Media in Los Angeles, 1928-94," beginning in February. Courtesy FILMFORUM

Two fixtures of L.A.'s downtown arts scene, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (L.A.C.E.) and FILMFORUM, have chosen to settle into a new, more centrally located space on Hollywood Boulevard. The new location, formerly the Newberry School of Beauty building, at 6522 Hollywood Boulevard, is sandwiched between two landmarks: Frederick's of Hollywood and Playmates, both purveyors of crotch-slit panties and peek-a-boo nighties. But just as Frederick's has come to symbolize Hollywood camp, L.A.C.E. and FILMFORUM have come to symbolize the vitality of Los Angeles' independent media-arts community. Will the organizations' focus shift with the new location? "Not really," says Gwen Darien, executive director of L.A.C.E. "After all, we're not going Hollywood, we're going to Hollywood Boulevard."

Hollywood Boulevard is home to nearly as many homeless poets and muttering crazies as L.A.C.E.'s original Industrial Street location in Los Angeles' warehouse district, with one important difference: Any hour of any day, Hollywood Boulevard draws a crowd. "Being in Hollywood is no more glamorous," says L.A.C.E. board member Mario Tamayo. "It's as rough as downtown, but downtown is just too lonely and scary. As long as there's a crowd around, you feel safe."

As for the reason behind the move, Darien says L.A.C.E. is going the way of other galleries. "When we moved into the Industrial Street location, there were 30 galleries downtown. Now there is only one. In Hollywood, we'll be in a central location for the arts," she observes. Richard Amromin, former administrative director of FILMFORUM, agrees: "A few years ago, there were a lot of people who still had hopes for downtown. But now, most everyone's idealism has caught up with reality. There really is no community downtown. Everyone else is gone. L.A.C.E. was one of the last."

The new L.A.C.E. space is scheduled to open on New Year's Eve. It features a large office and gallery space, screening rooms, performance space, window galleries, and a bookstore-café. Darien says she hopes to establish an outlet for the work of local video artists through informal screenings in the café and a selection of art videos for sale in the bookstore. "We generally want to expand all of our programs and to expand our video library," she says. The library currently houses eight years worth of L.A.C.E. video exhibits by local artists. The opening program, set to run from mid-January through March 1994, will include video presentations curated by Charles Gaines, Paul McCarthy, Stephan Prina, and Fran Seegul.

In the late eighties, L.A.C.E. joined forces with FILMFORUM, an ongoing showcase for independent, experimental, and progressive media, and the two have worked together to present complimentary programming over the years. But as John Stout, FILMFORUM's executive director, explains, "There is one important difference. FILMFORUM has always been active in bringing programming to the community. We have organized shows at Beyond Baroque, Self Help Graphics, and Kaos South Central." At press time, FILMFORUM planned to join L.A.C.E. at its new space in February. The organization will present "Scratching the Belly of the Beast: Cutting Edge Media in Los Angeles, 1928-94," an eight-week, citywide festival of screenings, tributes, and roundtable discussions celebrating Southern California's tradition of alternative media production and exhibition beginning on February 10. The Los Angeles run of the festival will be followed by national and international tours. Contributors to the festival catalog, which features photographs, stills, and historical and critical essays, include Kenneth Anger, Todd Boyd, Terry Cannon, Morgan Fisher, Anne Friedberg, Albert Kilchesty, Bérénice Reynaud, Eric Sherman, Jon Stout, and Holly Willis. Published by FILMFORUM, the catalogue will be sold in the L.A.C.E. bookstore and at all festival events for $5.

Joanne Hanley, chair of L.A.C.E.'s video committee has high hopes for future collaborations. "There will be so many moving images, electronic and chemical arts, and new technologies all in one place. Not just L.A.C.E. and FILMFORUM, but L.A.C.P.S. (Los Angeles Center for Photographic Studies) and others."

Another distinct advantage of the move is L.A.C.E.'s ability to attract out-of-towners en route to Mann's Chinese Theater or other local attractions. "We wanted to expand the audience. This location will allow us to reach even the tourists," Tamayo notes. "Imagine! These people can just walk down the street, and they'll be able to wander in and experience real art, something that can open their eyes."

JULIA ROBINSON SHIMIZU

Julia Robinson Shimizu is a Los Angeles-area writer who divides her free time between movies, museum, & naps.

COALITION FOCUSES ON PUBLIC INTEREST IN INFORMATION AGE

A coalition of more than 70 organizations was formed recently to bring public-interest issues to the forefront in government

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decisions regarding telecommunications zpolicy. In October, the coalition, called the Telecommunications Policy Roundtable, unveiled a blueprint for the emerging information infrastructure in the U.S. The blueprint includes a policy statement that calls on the President and Congress to "pursue a broad and public-interest vision for the National Information Infrastructure" rather than relying solely on big-business interests to shape policy decisions.

At press time, the coalition had met on three occasions and had received coverage in both the *New York Times* and *Variety*. According to Jeff Chester, of the Center for Media Education, one of the Roundtable's cofounders, this is the first time since the late sixties or early seventies that a major coalition of public-interest groups has been formed to deal with telecommunications policy. Many insiders believe the coalition, with a strategic alliance of nonprofit, consumer, labor, and civil-rights groups—including the American Library Association, the American Council for the Blind, and the Association of America's Public Television Stations, among others—has the potential to capture the ear of Washington policymakers.

Where do independent and noncommercial mediamakers fit into the picture? Their concerns are represented on the Roundtable by three organizations: the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), and the Alliance for Community Media (ACM).

At this juncture, there are many questions surrounding the development of the new information networks: Who will own them? Who will control the content? Who will have access to them? The Roundtable has articulated seven principles which, if reflected in future legislation and regulations, would safeguard a place for independent production as well as many noncommercial applications of the information infrastructure. These include: Universal Access; Freedom to Communicate; and a Vital Civic Sector.

The Universal Access principle states that in the information age, everyone has a right to affordable news, education, and government information. In addition, it stipulates information that is essential to the functioning of citizens in a democracy should be available free of charge.

The Freedom to Communicate princi-

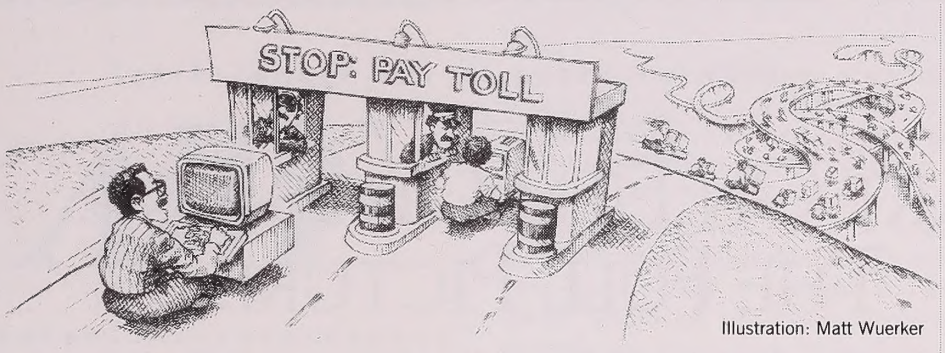


Illustration: Matt Wuerker

ple deems information a two-way street and adds that the design of the new networks should aid two-way audio and video communication from any individual, group, or network.

Lastly, the Vital Civic Sector principle argues that new networks should allow all groups and individuals to freely express their ideas and opinions, and that they should include a way for users to build communities.

Despite their disarming simplicity, the principles challenge the objectives of the communications industry's most powerful sectors. For example, one principle calling for a "diverse and competitive marketplace" explicitly states that "no one should ever control the wire(s) into our homes and the content of the programs that go over those wires." This principle contradicts the present modus operandi of the cable industry and the future designs of the telephone companies, many of which have already invested in joint ventures with cable operators.

The most dramatic bid for control over content and conduit is represented by Bell Atlantic's proposed merger with TeleCommunications, Inc., the largest cable company in the U.S. In addition to its cable delivery systems, TCI owns significant percentages of several programming entities, including Turner Broadcasting.

The coalition's blueprint comes less than a month after the Clinton administration released its own, called "National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action." The Clinton administration's blueprint envisions a national network linking computer, telephone, and television technologies. Roundtable member James Love of Ralph Nader's Taxpayer Assets Project characterizes the administration's "Agenda for Action" as a "vast disappointment" because it is vague in many important areas and "ignores the far-reaching changes in regulatory policies over the last 12 years on a wide range of public- interest issues designated to promote a diversity of views, noncommercial programming, and democratic dialogue."

One could argue that the history of communications policy in the U.S. has been the product of collaborations between the federal government and the big-business interests that it is supposed to regulate. From time to time, however, noncommercial interests, such as the newly formed Roundtable, have organized and forced a consideration of the "public interest" in communication's policy. The organizing has resulted in precedents such as "universal service" in the national telephone system and the creation of the Public Broadcasting System. A statement issued by the Telecommunications Policy Roundtable warns that unless a public-interest spirit guides policy development, "many of the shortcomings of our present telecommunications system will be intensified."

Currently the Roundtable is working on the creation of model communications legislation and hopes to develop activities that will encourage more public-interest participation in the development of policy. The coalition intends to uphold the final principle of its blueprint, which states, "The public should be fully involved in policy making for the information infrastrucure... the issues are not narrow technical matters which will only affect us as consumers; they are fundamental questions that will have profound effects on us as citizens and could reshape our democracy."

For more information on the Roundtable, contact: Martha Wallner, Advocacy coordinator, AIVF at (212) 473-3400.

MARTHA WALLNER

Martha Wallner is advocacy coordinator for the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers.

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POSTCARDS' SHOOT: SOMETHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT

While filming scenes for the upcoming independent feature *Postcards from America* in the California desert last September, producer Christine Vachon and production manager John Bruce encountered a series of stranger-than-fiction mishaps that culminated in Bruce's arrest by local police officers.

Postcards from America, based on the writings of the late gay artist David Wojnarowicz, brings the author's personal battles to the screen. The film's director, Steve McLean, chose the desert area around Twentynine Palms, California, as a setting for the film because it evoked the haunting feel of Wojnarowicz's writings about the rural American landscape, where he saw the reflections of a troubled society.



Michael Imperioli in *Postcards from America*, a feature film based on the writings of artist David Wojnarowicz.
Photo: Joyce George

According to Vachon, trouble began for her crew on the second day of the four-day shoot when a rental car, carrying most of the crew's water supply and a spare tire (but no jack) got a flat on an isolated stretch of desert road. Problems peaked again early the next morning when John Bruce was arrested for drunk driving and held in police custody for seven hours.

At about 12:30 a.m. on September 9, Bruce was driving Vachon and another crew member back from a local bar to their hotel when a sheriff pulled the car over. "The cop kept saying, 'Your pulse is high, and you're shivering,'" said Bruce about the battery of drug tests the sheriff's officers put him through. "I thought, of course it is; I'm in production."

Approximately 45 minutes of roadside drunk-driving tests followed, Bruce recalled, and he was then taken to an abandoned WalMart parking lot, where a dozen more officers were waiting to administer Breathalyzer tests. "I'm thinking they'll finally realize they made a mistake. They're going to apologize and let me go," said Bruce, who had now been in custody for more than three hours. Instead, officers asked him what drugs he was using and whether or not he was a homosexual. He was then carted off to jail.

According to Julian Schamus, a California attorney hired to represent Bruce, his client's .03 alcohol level measured well below California's legal limit of .08. He added that all charges against his client were later dropped due to lack of evidence. But Vachon, who said she felt alienated throughout the four-day shoot, has no plans to return to Twentynine Palms. "We were a bunch of New Yorkers, and we didn't look like them," she said. "They were mostly U.S. marines and straight older people."

When contacted by *The Independent*, Karen VandenHaut, executive director of Twentynine Palms' Chamber of Commerce, said she was not familiar with Vachon's production and added that the local community welcomes and includes gay people. "A lot of the time [film] people come with the perception that the people who live here are stupid." she said. "They can have a condescending attitude that creates problems."

Bruce said he's not sure what the underlying source of the difficulties was, but he is glad his story had a happy ending. "It's



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so fascinating that the process of making *Postcards* so mirrored David [Wojnarowicz's] life," he said. "And I can say this more freely knowing there's not a warrant out for my arrest."

Postcards from America will premiere in February at the Berlin International Film Festival.

KIMBERLY JEAN SMITH
Kimberly Jean Smith is a Manhattan-based writer.

SARAJEVO FILM FEST MORE THAN A SYMBOLIC GESTURE

Sarajevo's principal exports seem to be imagery and misery, but from October 22 to November 3 the city experienced an infusion of international cinema during the Beyond the Edge of the World Festival. Despite numerous setbacks, among them a momentary cancellation of the event, about 100 films, including titles lent by Jonathan Demme and Francis Ford Coppola, were exhibited in video format during eight daily screenings at three theaters around the city.

Among the highlights of the opening week were Bill Tribe's *Urbicide: A Sarajevo Diary* and the world premiere of Romain Goupi's *Lettre pour L-Y*. There were also children's films and a handful of U.S. independent works, including Camille Billops and James Hatch's *Finding Christa*.

For a festival poster, photographer Annie Liebovitz donated a shot of a boy taking a high dive from a bridge as a crowd of Sarajevans watch from along the water's edge. One onlooker wears a Batman T-shirt. The motifs of risk and rescue seem to express daily existence in the beleaguered city.

Mexican filmmaker Dana Rotberg, a festival organizer, originally travelled to Sarajevo last summer to make a documentary but decided against a perfunctory project. "The only thing for a foreigner is CNN-type reportage. So I decided to stay there and live there," she said during an October trip to Chicago to serve on the Chicago International Film Festival jury. Lending her Hi 8 camera to the cause, she joined SAGA, a documentary collective in Sarajevo that screened work at the San Francisco International Film Festival.

In a press statement, Rotberg called the festival "more than a symbolic gesture. It's

an artistic action directed against the physical and emotional violence that surrounds the city."

BILL STAMETS

Bill Stamets is a freelance writer and super-8 filmmaker based in Chicago.

SEQUELS

The results of the Independent Television Service's (ITVS) 1993 Open Call are in. ITVS recently announced 32 new productions recommended for funding, 19 more projects than were funded by 1992's Open Call ["ITVS' Trial by Fire," March 1993]. Six regional panels, the result of a Congressional mandate that ordered ITVS to fund projects representing "the widest possible geographic distribution," included members of the independent film- and videomaking and public television communities. The panels selected the winning entries from more than 1,000 proposals submitted.

Film- and videomakers recommended for funding are: Austin Allen (Cleveland, OH); Zeinabu irene Davis (Chicago, IL); Helen De Michiel (Minneapolis, MN); Kate Kirtz and Nell Lundy (Chicago, IL); Chris Spotted Eagle (Minneapolis, MN); Karen Cooper (Haworth, NJ); Marlon E. Fuentes (Philadelphia, PA); Jane Gillooly (Cambridge, MA); Theodore Lyman (Richmond, VT); John Bright Mann (Baltimore, MD); Frances Negron-Mutaner (Philadelphia, PA); Lisa Marie Russo (Philadelphia, PA); Anne Craig and Maia Harris (New Orleans, LA); Robby Henson (Danville, KY); William Hudson (Decatur, GA); Nietzchka Keene (Miami Beach, FL); Anne Lewis Johnson (Whitesburg, KY); Maria Michiyu Gargiulo (Seattle, WA); Laurence Goldin (Jeaneau, AK); Philip Mallory Jones (Tempe, AZ); Sandy Osawa (Seattle, WA); Stevan Smith (Kent, WA); J. Clements (San Francisco, CA); Tina DiFeliciantonio and Jane Wagner (San Francisco, CA); Alfred Hernandez (San Francisco, CA); Jesse Lerner and Ruben Ortiz Torrez (Los Angeles, CA); Nina Menkes (W. Los Angeles, CA); Michael Wallin (San Francisco, CA); Indu Krishnan (New York, NY); Ruth Lounsbury and Marina Zurkow (New York, NY); Greta Schiller (New York, NY); and Elia Suleiman (New York, NY).

ITVS also recently announced the elec-

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tion of six new members to its board of directors. The members include: Claire Aguilar, manager of broadcast programming at KCET in Los Angeles; Joan Braderman, video artist and associate professor of television production at Hampshire College; Kate Horsfeld, executive director of the Video Data Bank in Chicago; Edward Hugetz, senior vice president and provost of the University of Houston at Clear Lake; Lindsay Law, president and executive producer of PBS's *American Playhouse*; and Judy Richardson, content advisor and researcher for the acclaimed *Eyes on the Prize* series. The new members joined current ITVS board members Lawrence Daressa, David Ochoa, Jack Willis, and Laura Waterman Wittstock. Replacing outgoing president James Fellows, Dee Davis of Appalshop Films in Kentucky will serve as president and chair of the board.

ERRATA

An item that appeared in the November "In and Out of Production" column improperly identified Tom Burnett as codirector of *Trail of Blood*. Ari Roussimoff directed the feature; Burnett acts in the film. *Trail of Blood* is available in both 16mm and 35mm, not just 35mm.

An error in editing caused a sentence from Karen Rosenberg's article on foreign film schools ["New Euro Film Schools Woo Americans," October 1993] to read as follows: "Private language schools in Germany and Austria generally offer much lower prices than Goethe Institutes in the U.S." The sentence should read, "Private language schools in Germany and Austria generally offer much lower prices than Goethe Institutes in those countries."

In "Southern Exposure," [November 1993], one of the media arts centers mentioned by Stepheson Palfi was misidentified. The correct name is the Louisiana Center for Cultural Media.

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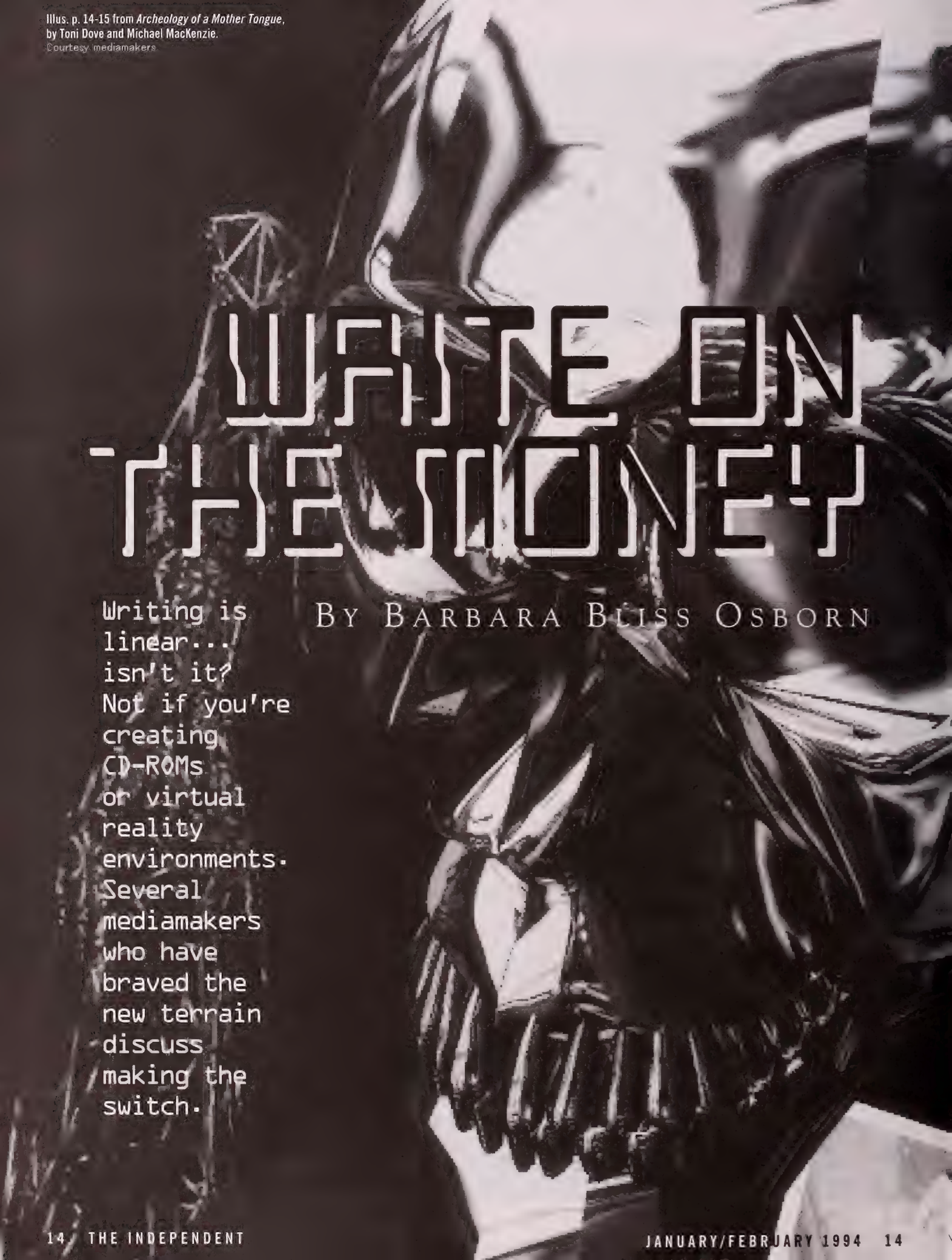
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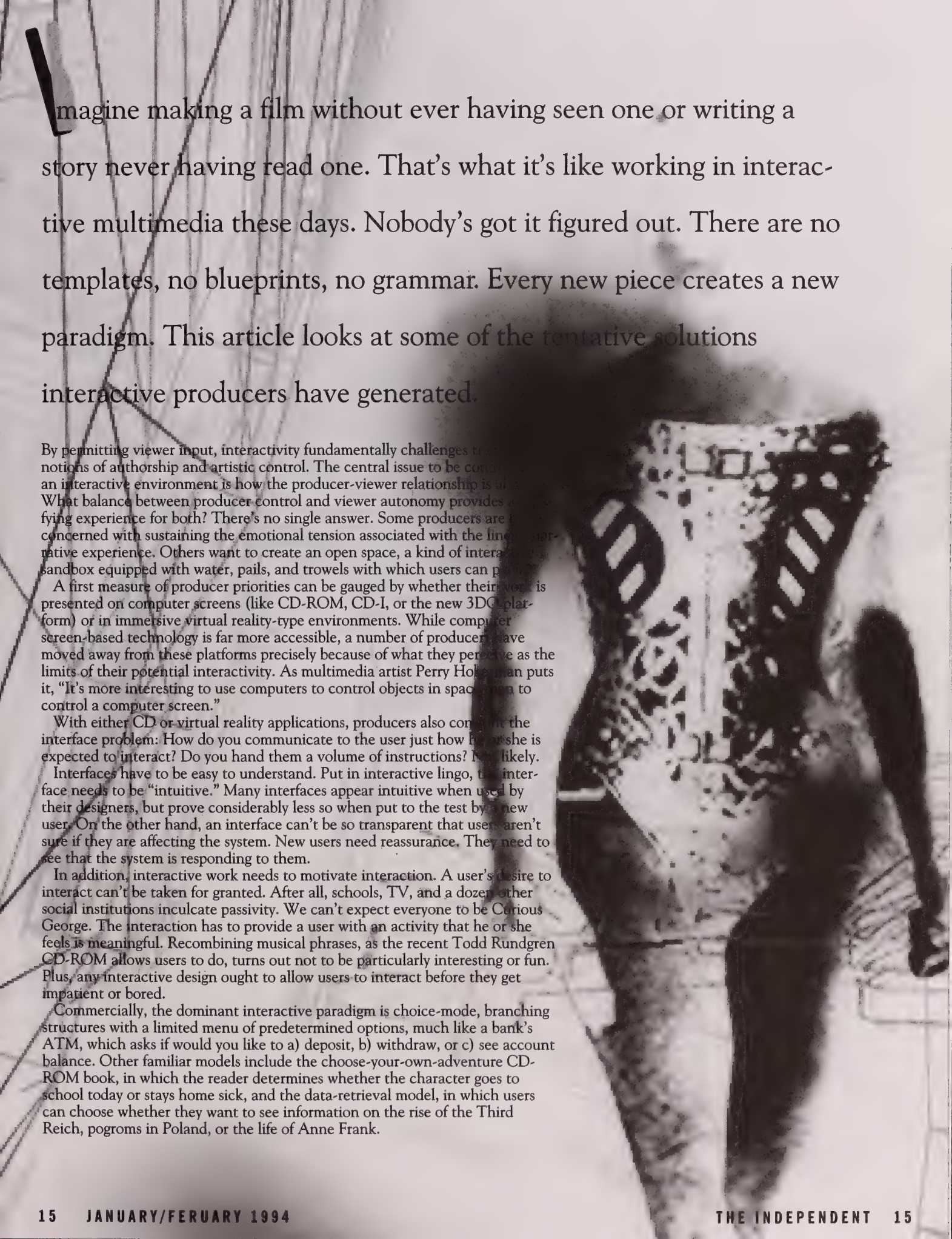
Illus. p. 14-15 from *Archeology of a Mother Tongue*, by Toni Dove and Michael MacKenzie. Courtesy mediamakers

WRITE ON THE MONEY

By Barbara Bliss Osborn

Writing is linear... isn't it? Not if you're creating CD-ROMs or virtual reality environments. Several mediamakers who have braved the new terrain discuss making the switch.

Imagine making a film without ever having seen one or writing a story never having read one. That's what it's like working in interactive multimedia these days. Nobody's got it figured out. There are no templates, no blueprints, no grammar. Every new piece creates a new paradigm. This article looks at some of the tentative solutions interactive producers have generated.



By permitting viewer input, interactivity fundamentally challenges tra[ditional] notions of authorship and artistic control. The central issue to be co[nsidered] in an interactive environment is how the producer-viewer relationship is [defined]. What balance between producer control and viewer autonomy provides a [satis]fying experience for both? There's no single answer. Some producers are [most] concerned with sustaining the emotional tension associated with the linear narrative experience. Others want to create an open space, a kind of interactive sandbox equipped with water, pails, and trowels with which users can play.

A first measure of producer priorities can be gauged by whether their work is presented on computer screens (like CD-ROM, CD-I, or the new 3DO platform) or in immersive virtual reality-type environments. While computer screen-based technology is far more accessible, a number of producers have moved away from these platforms precisely because of what they perceive as the limits of their potential interactivity. As multimedia artist Perry Hoberman puts it, "It's more interesting to use computers to control objects in space than to control a computer screen."

With either CD or virtual reality applications, producers also confront the interface problem: How do you communicate to the user just how he or she is expected to interact? Do you hand them a volume of instructions? Not likely.

Interfaces have to be easy to understand. Put in interactive lingo, the interface needs to be "intuitive." Many interfaces appear intuitive when used by their designers, but prove considerably less so when put to the test by a new user. On the other hand, an interface can't be so transparent that users aren't sure if they are affecting the system. New users need reassurance. They need to see that the system is responding to them.

In addition, interactive work needs to motivate interaction. A user's desire to interact can't be taken for granted. After all, schools, TV, and a dozen other social institutions inculcate passivity. We can't expect everyone to be Curious George. The interaction has to provide a user with an activity that he or she feels is meaningful. Recombining musical phrases, as the recent Todd Rundgren CD-ROM allows users to do, turns out not to be particularly interesting or fun. Plus, any interactive design ought to allow users to interact before they get impatient or bored.

Commercially, the dominant interactive paradigm is choice-mode, branching structures with a limited menu of predetermined options, much like a bank's ATM, which asks if would you like to a) deposit, b) withdraw, or c) see account balance. Other familiar models include the choose-your-own-adventure CD-ROM book, in which the reader determines whether the character goes to school today or stays home sick, and the data-retrieval model, in which users can choose whether they want to see information on the rise of the Third Reich, pogroms in Poland, or the life of Anne Frank.

Many producers coming from the independent production community are dismissive of what they consider simple-minded paradigms. As interactive filmmaker Grahame Weinbren says, "Making choices is about shopping. The current model for interactivity is the fast-food restaurant rather than a motorcycle ride." For these producers, response, not choice, is the operative word. Responsive systems are grayer. Viewer effect on the system is subtler and less about making black-and-white choices at specified points in the underlying structure.

Not all independent producers eschew the choice-mode branching model, however. San Francisco Bay Area video artist John Sanborn, who has worked with new video technologies for over a decade, is working on several choice-mode projects. One is for interactive film using Interfilm, a movie theater-based technology, which debuted last winter in eight cities around the country. This interactive film design uses a branching narrative in which audience members use the joystick to vote on key story decisions. Sony has since decided to equip several of its Translux theaters with the necessary interactive joystick and to produce movies for the medium. Sanborn acknowledges that the 20-minute test film, *I'm Your Man*, "sucked" but that the audience "went berserk. Interfilm is not a film. It's not a game. It becomes a party," he says.



From *Media Band* by John Sanborn, Courtesy mediamaker

Sanborn is also working on a branching CD-ROM. *Media Band*, which will include six interactive music videos and will be published by Apple early this year. It is among the first music CD-ROM titles. Other interactive music CDs have been released recently by Peter Gabriel, David Bowie, and Todd Rundgren, although none of these projects are narrative. *Media Band* revolves around a fictitious band developed by Sanborn and his partner, Michael Kaplan. Using a choice-mode structure, users control the parameters of the music and the video.

For instance, in the song "Undo Me," the lead singer introduces four guys with whom she can start a relationship. The user chooses one of the lucky fellows. Depending on who is chosen, each date has a different mix, lyrics, and images. The two go on a date and at the end of the evening, the user reaches another branch node. He or she is asked to decide whether the singer should react "passively" (the on-screen icon is an ice cube) or "aggressively" (the icon is flames). "Undo Me," Sanborn admits, is a little like a 21st century Mystery Date. With all its branches, the song runs about 26 minutes.

In addition to songs, *Media Band* also includes an archive in which the user can delve into the history of the group, a technical area filled with working sound- and image-editing equipment, a bunch of computer nerds running through the club where the CD is set, and a "smart bar" with scientists and writers. Touch one and you get a pithy piece of wisdom.

Sanborn acknowledges the limits of this model. "It may not save the world," he says with a vague apology, "but it's the beginning of what's key about all of this. This is only the first step." Compared to interactive data retrieval, movies-on-demand, and shopping projects, Sanborn argues, *Media Band* is a step forward. He is also sensitive to the fact that audiences are still unfamiliar with this medium. Interactive may turn out to be breathtaking and radically new, but the public needs simple, attractive, familiar-feeling introductions to it.

San Francisco documentary filmmaker Peter Adair, confronted with a similar teenaged and twenty-something target audience, arrived at a different structural solution. Adair's *Smart Money*, a 45-minute educational CD-ROM, was financed by a bank and cost nearly $1 million, a figure regarded as quite reasonable within the nascent interactive industry. The project was intended to teach teenagers about spending and credit. The interactive format was chosen, among other reasons, because students retain more in a context in which they are able to direct their own learning.

Adair's solution was to take a film narrative and alternate it with a learning game. In *Smart Money*, a group of characters graduate from school, get good jobs, and start to buy luxurious consumer products. When the game begins, players can also choose to go on hog-wild spending sprees (to be paid with cash or credit) or prudently watch their pocketbooks and pay their bills. Every six minutes they have to pay up. The narrative, says Adair, is intended to drive home an emotional lesson in the way that only film can do. The game, in turn, involves the players on a more conscious level. By combining the two forms, Adair wanted to prove that it was possible to create a strong emotional response within a computer game.

Both Sanborn and Adair agree that story is very important in sustaining the interactive experience, but that character is equally important. "The reason you decide to continue a conversation with somebody is because of character," Sanborn says. Adair agrees, noting that "The game business is realizing this more and more. To increase the market, they're going from twitch games and shoot-'em- ups to games that involve players with character."

Unlike many commercial projects that are measured by how many plays or play-hours they provide (the industry standard is 40 hours per game), *Smart Money* was designed to be played just once. What surprises Adair is that students want to play the CD over and over again. "The kids use it as a fantasy," he says. "They try out lives like *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*."

Another recent CD-ROM for kids, this one less explicitly pedagogical than *Smart Money*, is Peggy Weil's *Silly Noisy House*, which was designed for three-to-five-year olds. Published by Voyager, one of the country's leading publishers of interactive material [see article on page 22], *Silly Noisy House* is one of the company's few original interactive titles. Weil, who lives in Los Angeles, recounts that Voyager partner Bob Stein invited her to design an original project provided she could meet three constraints: 1) the project had to be for kids, 2) it had to be affordable, and 3) it had to use as much sound as picture, since audio is cheap. Weil was interested, but she didn't want to produce a game. She uses two analogies to describe *Silly Noise House*: a combination doll house and music box, and a pop-up book with animation.

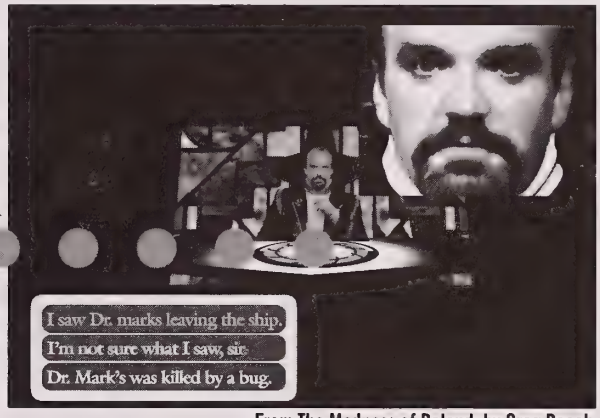
The opening visual presentation is a cutaway of a doll house. Click on a room, and enter it. Click on objects, and you hear nursery rhymes, noises, songs, and other public-domain material. For instance, if one clicks on the teapot in the kitchen, the CD plays the song "I'm a Little Tea Pot." Click on the spider in the attic, and hear "Eensy Beensy Spider." Many of the responses are part of a loop so that the sound is not the same each time one clicks on a particular object.

Like many interactive designers, Weil is quick to distinguish what she is doing from games. Yet she acknowledges that some games have helped forge solutions in interface design and have helped figure out a way to fire users' sense of play. The designers' deep-rooted contempt for games is directed at their goal-oriented, win-or-lose structure and their shoot-'em-up content. In fact, interactive designer Brenda Laurel says that in conducting research on girls and video games, she has found that the win-lose model prevalent in current games is particularly alienating to young girls.

So it's not surprising that Weil did not incorporate many games into *Silly Noisy House*. Instead, the CD encourages exploration. "Learning is not a game," Weil says. "It's a quest." As a result, she built in trapdoors that would reveal themselves with luck and play, and she tried to motivate kids' own creativity. "You need to give them something to manipulate," she adds. For that reason, Weil left "holes" or places for the imagination to fill. Her characters aren't given names so that kids can name them. Ordinarily in the games business, she explains, companies insist that characters have names because it enhances their merchandising potential.

Much of the current discussion surrounding interactive multimedia assumes that complex is better. But perhaps it's not. What's particularly striking about Weil's model is that, although it's very simple, it's also very fun to use, more so than many more complicated CDs. "People are trying to do too much," she says. "It may not be necessary to use every available feature all the time." Multimedia publisher Jaime Levy got her own lesson in simplicity after testing an interactive novel called *Ambulance*. She discovered that her cyber-savvy, X-Generation users were confused by multiple levels of interactivity, and she ended up eliminating all but one tier.

The Madness of Roland, produced by Greg Roach and published by Hyperbole Studios, forges bravely into more complicated structural terrain. Originally written as a linear tale, the CD tells the story of the 8th century siege of Par[illegible] fro[illegible] five different points of view. The title, which retails for $59.95, was publicized as "the world's first interactive multimedia novel" and includes text, animation, photography, QuickTime videos, and a complete sound track. *Roland* won the Best Interactive awards at the 1993 QuickTime Film Festival and the 1992 QuickTime Movie Festival.



From The Madness of Roland, by Greg Roach
Courtesy mediamaker

Unlike Sanborn's branching model, the user's actions don't determine how the story progresses, but instead the user chooses among multiple perspectives of the same scene in a model reminiscent of Akira Kurosawa's film *Rashomon*. Two layers of additional commentary are accessed by clicking on sun and moon icons. The sun level includes historical or literary texts from sources as disparate as Jung and *The Boy Scout Handbook*. The moon level includes more evocative, associative images, and QuickTime™ movies that are less obviously tied to the story material. Roach included the two separate layers so that users less comfortable with ambiguous artistic expression wouldn't be forced to deal with it.

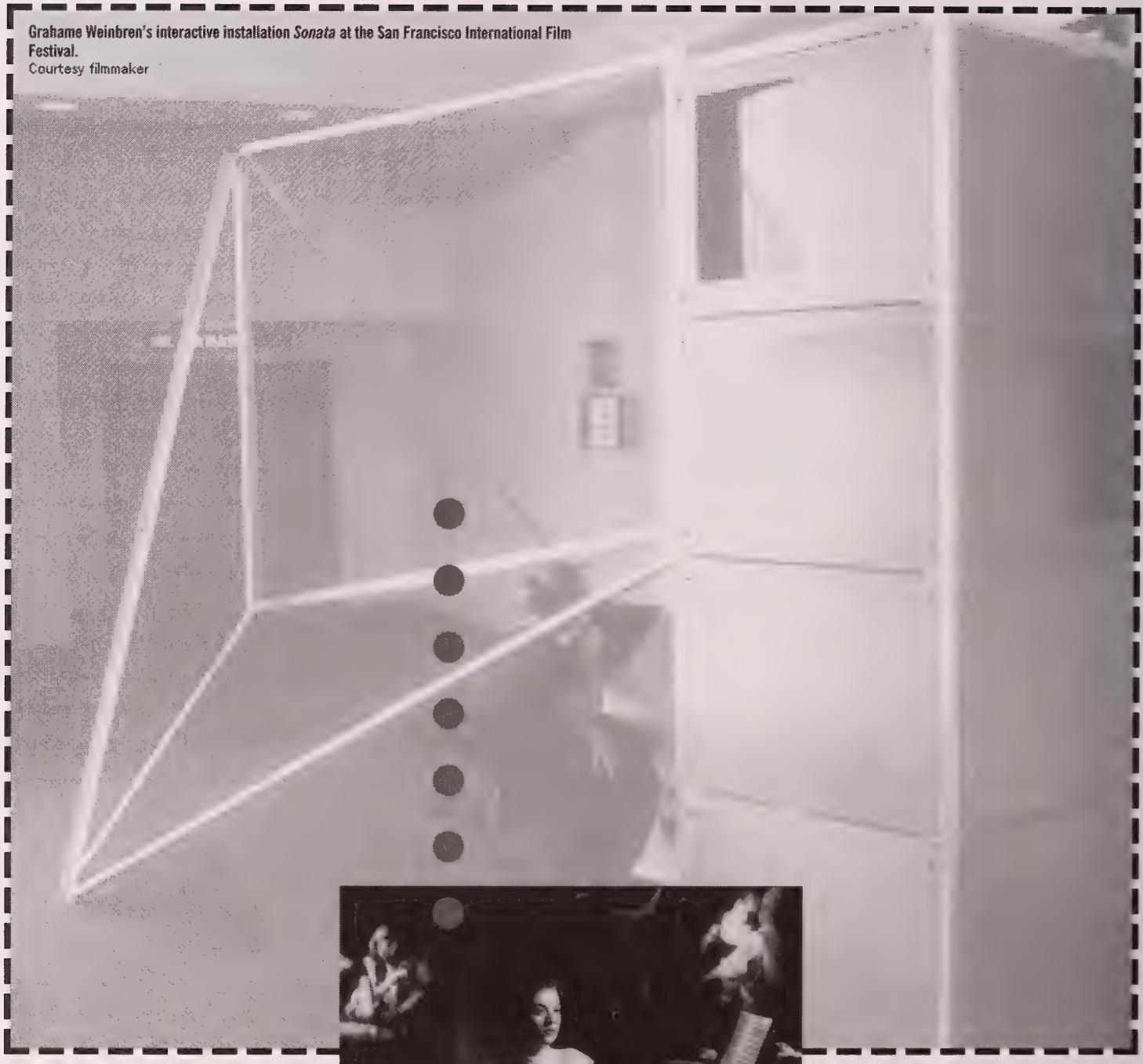
"Conceptually, *Roland* was born of the first blush of what this medium can be and was shaped by the technology of the time," says Roach, who teaches at San Francisco State's burgeoning multimedia program and at AFI's Advanced Technology Program [see article on p. 20]. He hopes that what is unique about *Roland* is its structural approach to juxtaposing the syntax of film and prose. Like *Roland*, Roach's more recent project, *No One Dreams Here*, tells a single story but allows users to access different points of view. Whereas *Roland*, as an interactive novel, is very reliant on text, *No One Dreams Here* is an interactive film and utilizes images to tell its science fiction story, which is designed to engage the user by having characters play directly to the camera.

With both interactive projects, Roach had to establish parameters of response and power for the user. "We offer the player as much freedom as we can in terms of exploration," he says. "At the same time, as filmmakers, we take the control that we need to shape the experience into a cohesive dramatic whole."

Similar concerns and intentions inform filmmaker Grahame Weinbren's work. Weinbren, a British-born New Yorker, has produced two installations for interactive laser disc players, a medium now regarded by the latest-is-the-greatest interactive community as nearly obsolete. Weinbren explains that CD-ROM technology still isn't fast enough to provide the amount of information he needs at 30 frames per second.

For Weinbren, the principal problem of interactivity is how to allow for, and even encourage, interruption of the narrative without disrupting the continuity of the cinematic experience. He

Grahame Weinbren's interactive installation *Sonata* at the San Francisco International Film Festival.
Courtesy filmmaker



compares the logic of interactive to a conversation. "When you're talking to somebody," Weinbren says, "you always expect a reply, but the reply itself is not very predictable." He motivates interaction with some simple psychology. "If people don't interact, it's not very interesting. All they get is talking heads."

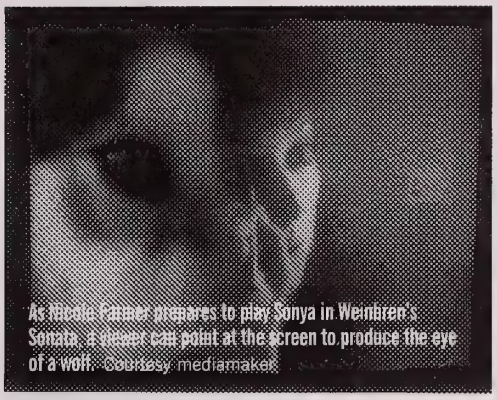
In his first interactive piece, *The Erlking*, produced in the late 1980s, a user touched the screen to move from the central narrative (a performance of the Schubert song "The Erlking") to additional visual and audio material. His more recent work, *Sonata,* is based on the Tolstoy short story "The Kreuzer Sonata," which tells of a man's jealousy over his musician wife and was written at the nadir in Tolstoy's own marriage. Rather than touch a screen, the user interacts with it by sitting at a monitor and waving his or her hand like a conductor. It's a little magical. The user can cut, dissolve, wipe, layer one image over another, and reverse the series of images. Weinbren had been unhappy with the effect of the touch screen in *The Erlking* because it ruptured the cinematic spell. "Every time you touched the screen," he says, "you were reminded that you were dealing with a flat image." By moving the web of infrared beams several inches away from the face of the monitor, he could use the same interface without the user having to touch cold glass.

Nicole Farmer as Sonya in Grahame Weinbren's interactive installation *Sonata,* based on Tolstoy's "The Kreutzer Sonata."

Courtesy filmmaker

Weinbren uses "The Kreuzer Sonata," which Tolstoy tells as a monologue, as an anchoring ostinato. He also includes a second narrative, the biblical story of Judith and Holofernes. Weinbren

chose both stories because they provided rich potential to explore multiple points of view. The story of the widow Judith beheading the pagan general and captor Holofernes has been represented in hundreds of paintings. Tolstoy, his wife, and children all kept diaries. To Weinbren, this is a "a massive cache of interactive source material," which can be accessed by users at points during the piece. Users weave an oneiric narrative that is part Tolstoy, part Judith and Holofernes, and part other materials that Weinbren has embedded in the piece.



As Nicola Farmer prepares to play Sonya in Weinbren's *Sonata*, a viewer can point at the screen to produce the eye of a wolf. Courtesy mediamaker.

From the user's perspective, interacting with *Sonata* can feel a little random, at least at the beginning, as one figures out how the screen has been divided and which parts of it trigger which responses. Weinbren contends that people usually catch on pretty quickly.

Philosophically, Weinbren remains closer to film than most interactive producers. "I'm trying to stay with what are the best options of the movies and narrative film," he says. Some interactive theorists argue that the very promise of interactivity is in the denial of beginnings, middles, and ends, but Weinbren disagrees. *The Erlking* had no ending, so people didn't know when it was over. "They left when they were bored with the piece," Weinbren says. "That's a bad principle of filmmaking. You have to excite an audience in the last five minutes."

A problem unique to interactive film is what Weinbren calls "the third dimension." How often is interactivity made available to users? Weinbren chose to increase the frequency of interaction and make it "a little more wild" as users get deeper into the piece. In a way, Weinbren admits, it's a pointless exercise, since he never knows whether people will take advantage of the opportunity to interact. However, Weinbren wants to be able to control when a user *can't* interact. At the climax of the story, when Tolstoy's character murders his wife, Weinbren cuts off all interaction in order to preclude a user shifting away from the intensity of the scene.

Like Roach, one of the things that led Weinbren to interactivity is its similarity to the workings of the mind and the subconscious. "If you're crossing the street, you're thinking about the car coming toward you, and you're also thinking about your latest quarrel and your dinner," he says. "And usually they all have something to do with each other." Weinbren often exploits interactive's similarity with thought-hopping. In *Sonata*, for instance, when a scene is played in reverse, events are altered slightly since in real life, memory doesn't always square with history. Weinbren also builds dream-like images that are condensations of many thoughts and feelings.

While producers like Roach and Weinbren pursue an elusive balance between maker control and user autonomy, other artists prefer to find a solution by immersing users in a narrative space. The result is less like film and more like environmental theater. In an article to be published in an upcoming issue of the magaine *Leonardo*, multimedia artist Toni Dove argues, "The lines [in interactive narratives] are... more complex, but you are still being guided along a linear path, which has been carefully preconceived or mapped." Dove says she wants to create a system to interact with rather than a map that predefines a user's passage.

Dove and her partner, Michael Mackenzie, had a chance to design a model of *Archaeology of a Mother Tongue* as part of Banff's Art and Virtual Environments program. The piece involved a theater-sized rear-projection screen with interactive computer graphics, video, and 3D scrims for animated slide projections. Unlike the cliché virtual reality (VR) experience, it did not involve a head-mounted display (HMD). Dove and Mackenzie decided that the VR headset was not the best way to present the 40-minute work, because the resolution of the HMD eye displays is low compared to the graphics they used, and they were also concerned that the piece was too long to be seen comfortably in a headset. As a consequence, *Archaeology* is much more like being on stage in a multimedia theater than flying through psychedelic space in films like *Lawnmower Man.*

To view *Archaeology*, a user wears a power glove with which she or he can stop and start the visuals and control the movement through the projected 3-D environment. As the user moves through three successive environments, a narrative unfolds. Touching certain objects within the projections with the power glove triggers sound and text. Users move through the environments in linear sequence, and each time the information is essentially the same.

The immersion experience is like "a movie sprung free from the screen which occupies a space along with the viewer or audience." But Dove's movie analogy can be taken only so far. In working on her project, she found that a virtual environment requires a whole different language than film. "In film," she says, "time passes with a cut. VR is continuous space." For example, in a virtual world, if somebody stops to look around, sound has to continue to be generated in real time. Ultimately, to provide continuous sound for *Archaeology of a Mother Tongue*, she built a machine that created a continual soundtrack based on random parameters.

Perry Hoberman's *Bar Code Hotel*, another work produced at Banff, does not immerse users in a virtual world. Instead, Hoberman juxtaposes objects in a real space with representations of those objects in a 3-D projection of space. Participants within the real space control the positioning of the virtual objects in the projection.

Hoberman believes there has to be a one-to-one, predictable relationship between a user's action and a system's response. "It should work like a light switch," he says. As a result, he argues, it makes more sense for a user to "initiate" an event than to "interrupt" it. "If you're telling a story and don't let people finish their sentences, it gets incoherent."

On the other hand, Hoberman says that interactivity necessitates relinquishing control over content. "With interactivity, it's better to have nothing to say, than to try to say something," he states, indulging in a bit of artistic heresy. "It's better for meaning to come out of the interaction. The ideal is to come up with a program structure that feels totally responsive, but nobody has, at least not yet. That's why it's more important to focus on the interactivity itself."

Brenda Laurel would agree. Like Dove and Hoberman, she also rejects choice modes and interactive stories. "After 15 years," she says, "I don't believe in any of that anymore." Laurel, a Palo Alto-based artist-anarchist with a background in theater and game design, is the Emma Goldman of VR. She's not concerned with controlling the viewer's experience. The best prototype for interactivity, she says, is a good drawing software program with an interesting mixture of freedom and constraint. "Good ones have *continued on p. 53*

BY BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

TECHNO TRAINING GROUNDS

The American Film Institute and the Banff Centre for the Arts

THE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM AT THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE

"What we teach isn't taught anywhere else," says Nick DeMartino, director of the American Film Institute's Advanced Technology Program (ATP). Established with a $1-million contribution of Apple computer equipment in 1990, the program began offering workshops and events in 1991 to help people learn about new media. There are courses on now run-of-the-mill technologies, like Macintosh computers and AVID nonlinear editing systems. Plus, students can receive hands-on training in more exotic domains, like PhotoCD technology and interactive multimedia, or stretch their writing skills with a course titled "Interactive Fiction: Transformation of Classic Structure." This fall there's even an offering called "Previsualization for the Overwhelmed." The workshops and seminars, which generally cost between $70 and $250, are held on the AFI Hollywood Campus in the Mac Quadra lab, digital lecture/demo room, or multimedia lab.

In the old West, missionary outposts were set up to spread the word of God. Today new outposts are being established. Instead of thumping Bibles, these preachers click on mice. The new centers, like the American Film Institute's Advanced Technology Program in Los Angeles and the Virtual Environments project at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada, are designed to tempt the curious and propagate the new faith.



<The American Film Institute Warner Communications Building, home of the Advanced Technology Program. Courtesy AFI

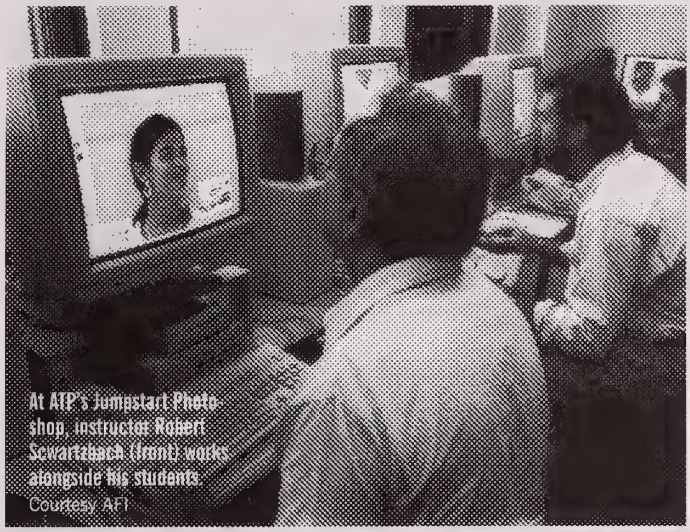
Special events are also part of the ATP's schedule. Recent programs included a weekend symposium on technology careers for women, a soiree with production company Colossal Pictures, and a visit from the Industrial Light & Magic designers who worked on Jurassic Park. The Advanced Technology Program also runs weekly "salons"—shmooze and information-sharing sessions—which focus on high-tech hardware and software. These get-togethers are a kind of Hollywood paradox: In the midst of industries mired in intense competition and secrecy, Martino contends that everybody at these salons is "very generous" with information. "We're all telling the same joke, and nobody knows the punch line," he says, referring to new technologies as yet undefined platforms and paradigms. In the way of entertainment industry truths, that statement is partly correct. You're certainly more likely to find candor in this group than at most industry gatherings. Salon and special-event admission usually costs about $25.

ATP instructors and presenters come directly from Hollywood and Silicon Valley. Ray Feeney, for instance, teaches high-end output for feature films and documentaries. He also runs an L.A. computer effects house and has won two Scientific and Technical Achievement Academy Awards. David Riordan, who teaches interactive multimedia, also develops CD entertainment titles for POV Digital Entertainment, until recently a division of Phillips Interactive. Alan Lasky is a computer graphics designer for features, who also teaches Mac animation and is helping ATP integrate computer skills into the curriculum for AFI film and TV degree students.

The difficulty in teaching interactive technology is, Lasky says,

"We don't have a defining structure of interactive media. We haven't seen *Birth of a Nation* or *Intolerance*, so there's no base to teach from. We're teaching an ideal that doesn't exist yet. You keep waiting for one of your students to be the interactive prodigy." He believes that "our D.W. Griffith" will come from video games, although he admits that a background in narrative filmmaking is still important.

David Riordan taught his six-week Advanced Interactive Design workshop for the first time last fall. Twenty people, an



At AFI's Jumpstart Photoshop, instructor Robert Schwartzbach (front) works alongside his students.
Courtesy AFI

even mix of men and women in their thirties and forties, plunked down $500 to learn about interactive design. The course is intensive. Over the first four weeks, Riordan explores what an interactive designer does, how interactive relates to linear narrative, and the complications of interactive production and direction. In the final two weeks students develop their own designs.

Independent producer Nancy Nickerson is reading the *Hollywood Reporter*'s "Turning Interactive" issue while waiting for Riordan's class to start. Since she isn't involved in any film production at the moment, Nickerson has thrown herself into this. "I closed my eyes and pulled out my credit card," she says. So far, she's taken five classes in the program. Her goal is to figure out how interactive technologies are going to interface with film. It might allow her to segue out of her career, she says. Luann Barry, a producer of commercials, sits next to her. "I'm here to see how much desktop production is a threat to what I do," she explains. She's also hoping to apply her live-action experience to interactive games, but she's got some reservations. "If it's all computer images, I'm not interested," she says. "I'm interested in human beings."

Riordan begins the first class by putting his cards on the table. "There are no truths in interactive multimedia," he says. "It's one of the exciting things about this business: There are no rules. There's no gospel here." And with that preface, he launches into his own preferences and the knowledge he accumulated by trial and error while designing his own CD titles. Introducing his central premise, Riordan says, "Games—not video games, but games and the gaming instinct—are absolutely central to interactivity."

The Advanced Technology Program clearly attracts mainstream Hollywood types fearful for their livelihood. They know that the entertainment world is not just about film stock anymore—a point that's underscored by the hefty contributions from industry manufacturers like Kodak, Sony, Adobe, and SuperMac. The Advanced Technology Program also receives funding from the Markle and MacArthur Foundations and the National Endowment for the Arts. MacArthur recently funded a program at ATP co-sponsored by the National Association of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC) called "The Digital Independents," a week-long, hands-on workshop for media artists led by San Francisco multimedia artist Dana Atchley.

Nick DeMartino, who produced alternative videos during the 1970s, these days refers to himself as "the digital Sol Hurok," referring to the great impresario who brought legendary concert artists to public attention. DeMartino believes there's a place in the new technological landscape for independent producers. Technologies like personal computers and QuickTime™ software have reduced the cost of production yet again, making it even more possible for the field to be open to any and everyone, he argues.

But following the same line of cheap-equipment-means-access thinking, documentary producer and interactive designer Peter Adair questions the need for a school. Adair suggests that without an established syntax, there isn't much anybody can teach. "The great thing is [the equipment's] cheap and it doesn't really matter what program you use," he says. "You can teach yourself a lot." Talking like a veteran independent, Adair suggests that interested producers start with "a $1,000 computer and a stolen piece of software."

THE ART AND VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS PROGRAM AT BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

If AFI's Advanced Technology Program is a school, the Art and Virtual Environments program at Banff is a hybrid think tank/artist colony. Of all the advanced technology labs, this one, located in Alberta, Canada, has the reputation of being the most artist-friendly. Philosophically, project director Doug MacLeod believes that artists' input into technological development is critical. Artists can develop new paradigms for research and new ways of expressing content, and can conceive of entirely new uses for the technologies. The program is also meant to advance a particular socio-cultural vision of future communication. "Everybody has to get their hands dirty," MacLeod says. "Otherwise we'll just have another TV network."

The Virtual Environments program is a deliberate attempt to counterbalance what is perceived as short-term corporate development strategies for new technologies. Suggesting that artists bring content to their work—while industry, by implication, does not—MacLeod predicts, "Without content, all these technologies will fail." The Centre's reservations about industry development, however, have not precluded them from forging joint agreements with soft- and hardware manufacturers like Silicon Graphics, Apple, and Autodesk. Additional funding for the program comes from the Canadian government.

The Banff Centre began its Art and Virtual Environments project two years ago as part of the Media Art Department's Computer Applications and Research program. Its first phase, developed under the title Bioapparatus, included a series of residencies and a symposium. The Art and Virtual Environments project followed and, like Bioapparatus, has sponsored artist residencies (including projects by Perry Hoberman, Brenda Laurel and Rachel Strickland; Stewart Dixon and Michael Scroggins; and Michael Mackenzie and Toni Dove) and a seminar to be held in May 1994 immediately following the Fourth International Conference on CyberSpace.

Despite the premium it places on artistic exploration, the program requires material results. "Things actually get produced," says MacLeod. "At a certain point, pieces have to be functional."

continued on page 58

VOYAGER VISION

A TALK WITH BOB STEIN, FOUNDER AND PARTNER, *THE VOYAGER COMPANY*

BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

The field of multimedia software is relatively young. But the Voyager Company, a New York-based software house known for its innovative laserdisc and CD-ROM packages, has, in just a few years, proven that the interactive market is one of infinite possibilities.

Voyager began working with optical media in 1984 as a laserdisc publisher. Its Criterion Collection of home-video laserdiscs now includes more than 150 titles, ranging from *The Graduate* and *The Player* to *Ugetsu*. All Criterion Collection films are presented in their original aspect ratio, which allows for a greater sense of depth and makes visible details that are routinely lost when images are cropped for television.

In 1989, Voyager developed a HyperCard application to enhance listeners' understanding of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which resulted in what many consider the industry's first consumer CD-ROM. Since then, Voyager's music-appreciation CD-ROMS have become staples of many multimedia collections. The company's top sellers include Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, both of which combine CD-quality stereo reproduction with running commentary by leading musicologists. Other Voyager CD-ROM offerings include *Poetry in Motion*, which traces the work of two-dozen contemporary poets; *Criterion Goes to the Movies*, which offers QuickTime movie clips, photos, and background information on the laserdiscs published by Voyager; and *Rodney's Wonder Window*, a hands-on interactive art exhibition by artist Rodney Alan Greenblatt.



Lolita is presented in its original split-format aspect ratio for the first time. The film was shot with two alternating aspect ratios, 1.66:1 and 1.33:1. A new digital film-to-tape transfer was created using a 35mm duplicate negative and 35mm 3-track magnetic master. This transfer was supervised by Stanley Kubrick.

Most recently, Voyager has released a feature-length movie, the Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night*, on CD-ROM. The interactive disc allows users to stop the film, jump to other scenes, and search for specific songs. Like Voyager's other CD-ROM packages, *A Hard Day's Night* is reasonably priced at $39.95.

After the company's recent move east from Santa Monica to SoHo, *The Independent* was able to catch up with Bob Stein, one of the company's founders and partners, for a rare interview. Dressed casually in T-shirt and jeans (normal office attire for the 50 or so employees that inhabit the company's open loft space on lower Broadway), Stein, in the interview that follows, discusses the Voyager Com-

pany's continuous evolution, opportunities for mediamakers in software publishing, and the future of the industry.

Independent: How did you become interested in new technologies?

Stein: About 15 years ago—no, 13 years ago—I came to a juncture in my life when I had the opportunity to figure out what I wanted to do. I spent my days in the library reading about the stuff and my nights waiting on tables. I couldn't decide if I wanted to publish or work on the medium.

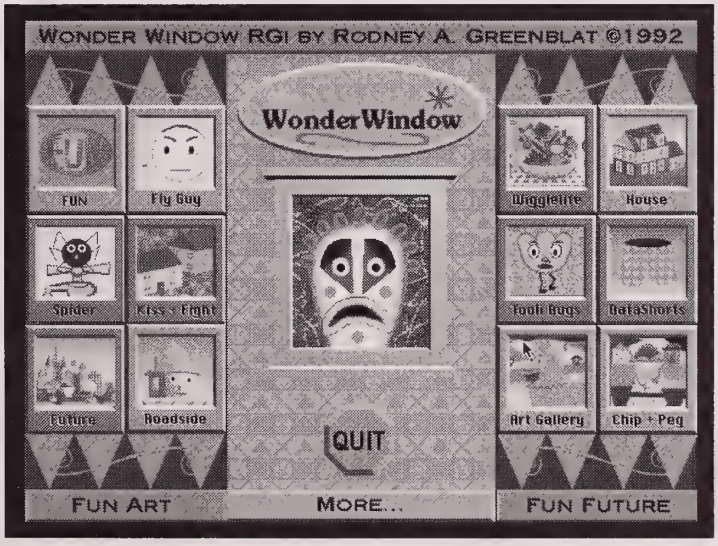
Independent: Did Voyager start out as a laserdisc publisher?

Stein: Yeah. The only technology that was available to consumers that was interactive at that time was laserdiscs. But we saw a technology that would allow us to create an experience using what's aesthetically pleasing on the laserdisc. The vision we started with was the kind of stuff we're doing now on computer. But you couldn't do it back then.

It wasn't very original on my part. It was all stuff that was being done at [the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.] Everything we've done is derivative of work done at MIT. Nothing we have done is conceptually original.

Independent: When did your company start up?

Stein: 1984. We started the company in California, but we've been bicoastal since 1985. Now we're based here.



***Rodney's Wonder Window*, a hands-on interactive art exhibition by Rodney Alan Greenblatt.**
Courtesy Voyager

Independent: That's very recent, is it not?

Stein: We moved our headquarters here in July [1993].

Independent: What was the reason?

Stein: There's a much richer cultural community here in New York. People in Southern California make movies, and we don't make movies. It didn't enrich us being there. Artists, writers, and graphic designers here are much more rich in ideas. Also, in Northern California the focus is on hardware.

Independent: There are four partners?

Stein: Yes. Myself, my ex-wife Helene Stein, John Turrell, and Bill Becker, who are also the owners of Janus Films.

Independent: What was your aim at the time you started the company? How did you envision your laserdiscs would be different from others on the market?

Stein: At the time, the existing market for laserdiscs was movie buffs, but there was also a whole other group of people attracted by what technology could do. We sought to put out something on the market that would attract both the movie buffs and the people interested in the technology itself, which we did by putting out editions of *Citizen Kane* and *King Kong*. We paid a lot of attention to making the best transfer possible, and that appealed to movie buffs. For everyone else, we started using technology. We were the first to put things out in the CAB format, which allows you to get still frames and slow motion—and allows people to look at the film more carefully. In the case of *King Kong*, we added a second soundtrack, where a wonderful anecdotal history of the film was provided. We put in scripts, outtakes, storyboards, production photos, and advertising: everything we thought the average person interested in film would want to see. We were very lucky. We did attract both markets.

Independent: Is your market mostly consumers?

Stein: It's always been a consumer market.

Independent: How closely have you worked with independent makers? I've read that filmmakers the likes of John Singleton are now approaching you and wanting Voyager to publish their works on laserdisc.

Stein: I don't really consider John Singleton an independent. It's sort of a stretch.

Independent: Well I know you've published some video works by Bill Viola.

Stein: We publish artists' work on video. We are Bill's publisher. We also publish a two-volume collection from Rick Prelinger's archives of shorts, commercials, and industrial movies called Ephemeral Films. We want to make it possible for people to see new work.

Independent: Is a certain percentage of the laserdiscs and CD-ROM discs you publish independent work?

Stein: We do as much as we can afford, let's put it that way. It never pays for itself.

Independent: Do film- and videomakers approach you, or do you approach them?

Stein: It's mostly us approaching them. The people who approach us now are big-name directors who want their films in the Criterion Collection.

Independent: Once you connect, there's so much that goes into the [making of the] laserdisc. Is there a lot of extra work on the maker's part?

Stein: You're confusing apples and oranges. When we do the films, we add a lot of additional information; when we do stuff like Bill Viola or Gary Hill, we put the work on video disc and don't add anything to it.

Independent: When did Voyager begin getting involved in CD-ROM technology?

Stein: As soon as Apple put one out. About five years ago.

Independent: But it was just this year you put out the Beatles' *Hard Day's Night* on CD-ROM?

Stein: Yes.

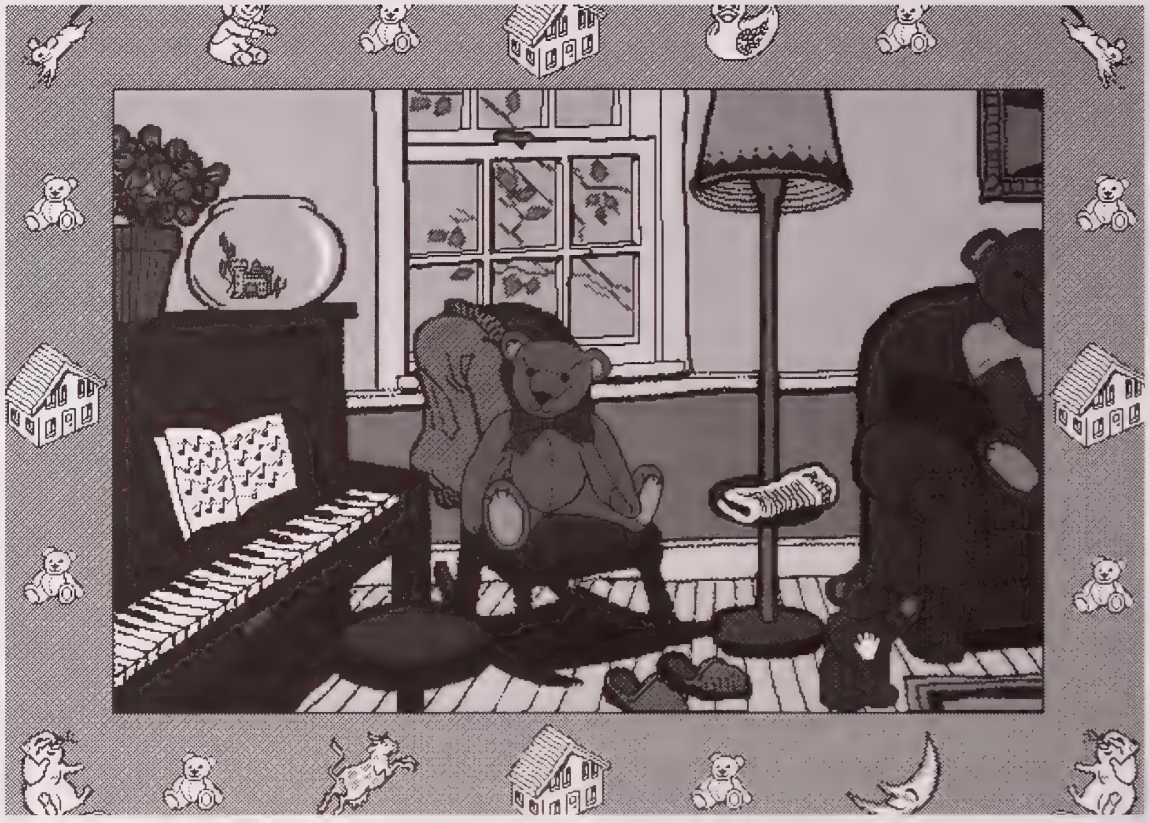
Independent: When I previewed the film, someone [from Voyager] told me it was selling really well.

Stein: Eh.

Independent: No?

Stein: It's all right. It's certainly not our bestseller. We've sold about 10,000 or 12,000 copies.

Independent: What do you think the problem is? Do not enough people have access to the CD-ROM technology?



Stein: No, I think the Beatles aren't exactly associated with new technology. The Beatles are not new.

Independent: So why did you choose that particular film?

Stein: We happened to own the rights to it, which made it easier to do. It has music. It's in black-and-white. Of all the things we own the rights to, it was the best one.

Independent: How are you promoting it?

Stein: We're not doing any major promotion.

Independent: So marketing is not at the top of your list of priorities?

Stein: My main job is to make things that are interesting. That's my personal focus. It's not that I'm not interested in marketing, I just don't have good answers to your questions.

Independent: In terms of low-budget mediamakers—not the John Singletons, but those who are making their first projects—how do they fit into your operation? Is there a place for them?

Stein: I think that young people coming out of film schools now may end up being the future artists in this medium, because they have the freedom to get involved in something new. It's a little late for John Singleton, because he's gone on to make feature films with multimillion-dollar budgets. People attracted to this field probably won't have access to such budgets. People are just starting to consider careers in interactive media as opposed to careers in filmmaking. I think it's a very rich environment for documentaries and feature films—but of a new type.

Independent: CD-ROM seems to lend itself so well to documentaries because of all the information that it supplies. Is that an area you're focusing on?

Stein: We're waiting for the practitioners. We're waiting for the artists to come forward. We're waiting for people out of film school to come and say, We want to make a documentary on this or that subject.

Independent: There are other technologies out there besides CD-ROM. Why do you focus on this particular technology?

Stein: CD-ROM allows the most freedom to assemble materials in a way that is personal. If you want to broadcast a large movie to people, it's not very useful. But if you want to provide motion pictures, still pictures, text, audio, and publishing, it's very effective.

Independent: How does CD-ROM compare to the other technologies, like CD-I?

Stein: Well, they don't exist. The major difference is the other technologies, like CD-I and CDTV, are used with a television set. It's very easy to make titles on CD-ROM and very complicated on CD-I. That's why a lot of people say CD-I is dead.

Independent: One article stated that your "commitment to cultural excellence might eventually lead to the company's downfall." How do you respond to this?

Stein: I have no objections to doing other things; it's just that no one has shown me anything interesting enough to publish. We basically do stuff we like.

Independent: Can you take me through the process of what happens once you approve the idea of a film- or videomaker?

Stein: Ideas are cheap. I've got a thousand of them. The question is, Does the person have enough passion, drive, and smarts to actually finish something? If the person has no skills whatsoever in electronic media, they'd better have a tremendous amount of passion to make up for the lack of skills. Nobody comes to us with everything.

Independent: Regarding the "New Vision, New Voices" contest that Voyager is sponsoring to encourage creativity on the computer, your entry materials say "There's a strong tendency to be safe in form and content" when it comes to software publishing. Do you feel that about Voyager's works?

Stein: It's the edgy stuff I'm interested in seeing [as a result of the contest].

Independent: Why not aim to publish more edgy stuff?

Stein: You can't make money. If Bill Viola came to me tomorrow and said he wanted to make a CD-ROM, and I gave him $50,000 to make it , there's no way I'll get the money back. So the purpose of the contest is to get younger artists to do a treatment piece on their own.

Independent: When's the deadline?

Stein: February 1.

Independent: If people don't have access to the equipment...

Stein: That's part of the passion question. If you can't beg, borrow, and steal, you're never going to make it.

Independent: Will the winning work be published by Voyager?

Stein: We're not taking any rights to the works that are submitted. We don't know what we're going to see.

Independent: How many projects do you usually have in the works at one time?

Stein: One hundred or so.

Independent: How do you see Voyager fitting into the information superhighway of the future?

Stein: Hardware is an irrelevant question. We're not focused on hardware; we're focused on ideals.

Independent: Do you see getting more involved with the technologies of the future?

Stein: We are publishers, and we use whatever medium we can. As new distribution media evolve, we will change. What form [the published works] will take, we don't really know right now.

Independent: Do you have a lot of competition?

Stein: Our competitors are Microsoft, Sony, Warner, Random House...

Independent: Where do you see Voyager 10 years from now?

Stein: Our goal for the past 10 years— and I hope for another 10—is publishing. Publishing.

TAPPING THE CD-ROM MARKET

Independent: I'm curious how you market the CD-ROM technology, since it's so new, and many people are unfamiliar with it.

Todd Wade, Marketing Coordinator, the Voyager Company: We went and talked to movie industry [insiders] about CD-ROM. Fundamentally, they could relate to a movie like *Hard Day's Night*. Most people have heard of CD-ROM, but they haven't seen a film on one, so the fact that they understood the movie and the script was really a help. Siskel and Ebert talked about it, and so did Leonard Maltin. After that, *Hard Day's Night* flowed naturally into the growing consumer desire for CD-ROM discs. Also, this disc fits the typical owner of Macintosh CD-ROM: about 40 years old with a lot of high-tech equipment.

Independent: Did these demographics factor into the decision of which film was used?

Wade: I guess it was one of the factors.

Independent: How are you marketing *Hard Days' Night*? Where would I find it in a store? And which store—A bookstore? A video store?



Wade: If you walked into a computer store, they now have CD-ROM sections, which is a rather new development. This is the first year that CD-ROM sections became almost mandatory. Any store with a software section has them.

Independent: And are there displays?

Wade: What we did was put a preview on the disc, so any retailer with a computer set up could let it run.

Independent: Bob Stein said the sales of *Hard Day's Night* have not been stellar. Is that what you anticipated?

Wade: Well, it's only been on the market less than half a year, and there are lots of new purchasers in the marketplace. *Hard Day's Night* was named *MacUser* Magazine's top-selling disc [in September 1993].

Independent: Are there others in the works?

Wade: We just released a Windows version, so now it's available for Macintosh and Windows. Our next CD-ROM is a guide to our collection of movies on laserdisc called *Criterion Goes to the Movies*. After that we'll release *Salt of the Earth* in January. It's a dramatic film from the fifties about conditions in the rural Southwest.

Independent: Why that film?

Wade: It's a film that's particularly important to one of Voyager's four owners. It's also a project that lends itself to multiple sound. We can use both Spanish and English. It was also blacklisted in the U.S.

I think the CD-ROM technology will have to improve, so the quality of the video is enhanced. Because of the additional information that CD-ROM discs provide, people are willing to accept watching the film at a much smaller size than they would on a regular movie or television screen. It's a different way of studying or examining film.

Independent: How important is marketing to Voyager overall?

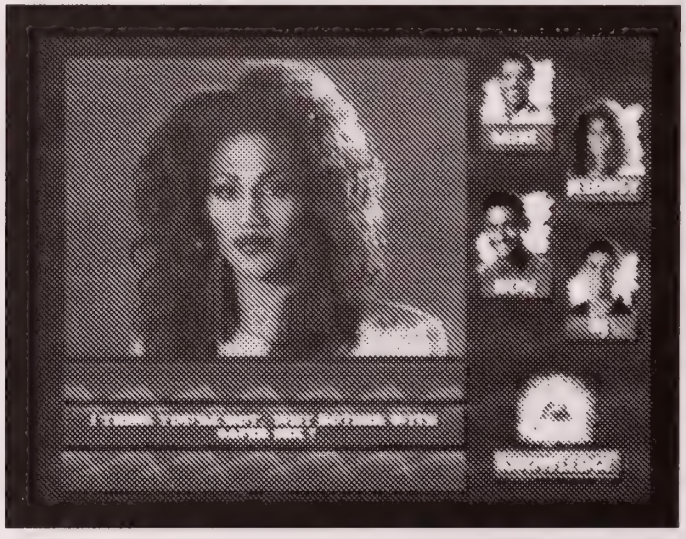
Wade: To continue to publish the types of works we've published in the past, we need to ensure that the market grows in a way that works with what we're trying to do. The market could grow around "edu-tainment." That's unacceptable to me, but that is the major direction in which the market is growing.

BY BRIAN GOLDFARB

INTIMATE INTERACTIVITY

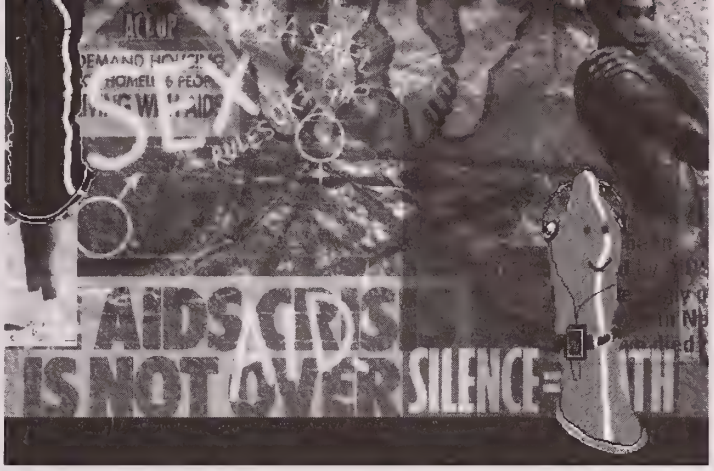
Creating Safer-Sex Software

Users of the computer-interactive dating game *Brothers* are confronted with a provocative invitation: "Touch any man on the right to turn him on," reads one of the game's first menu options. To the right of the text appear wallet-sized portraits of four African-American men, potential dream dates who come alive, speak, and engage in dialogue with users at the touch of the cursor. This is no ordinary arcade game but a program created by and for gay, bisexual, and transgendered African-American men to generate discussion about safer-sex practices. The laserdisc and computer interface are designed to be installed in freestanding kiosks in gay bars and clinics and to be accessed at no cost to the user.



Brothers is a collaborative project of the Interact Program of the Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) and the Brothers' Network, a service organization within the National Task Force on AIDS Prevention (NTFAP) that focuses on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, advocacy, and counseling. The program is one of many new interactive software projects produced through collaborations between independent producers, media arts organizations, and AIDS advocacy groups.

Video is a familiar mode of safer-sex education and media activism among nonprofits in part because it has become relatively cheap and standardized, and it can be broadly distributed. Some advocacy groups, like the Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) of New York, have created in-house audio-visual departments devoted mainly to video production and distribution. Interactive software products like *Brothers*, however, are less familiar items in the HIV/AIDS nonprofit media context. Requiring expensive production facilities and specialized playback platforms, programs like this have, until recently, been viable only among institutions and businesses that can afford specialized, high-end multimedia stations. Why,



then, are nonprofit media and HIV/AIDS advocacy organizations pursuing interactive multimedia production?

Interactive computer programs like *Brothers*, the British media arts group ARTEC's *Think Positive*, and Canadian First Nation producer Russell Wallace's *AIDS and the Native Community* serve a particular need that can't be adequately met by video alone. In most cases, HIV/AIDS videos are presented to audiences in workshops, peer groups, and classrooms and often are followed by peer- or counselor-led discussions. Interactive computer programs can offer a very different kind of viewing experience, one that potentially engages its audience in more casual, less structured settings, effectively reaching people who may not choose to read a pamphlet, attend a video screening, rent a tape, or participate in a workshop. Furthermore, these programs can be designed to incorporate multiple narratives, characters, or kinds of information, which users can selectively choose from to cut right to their particular interests and needs. Interactives engage viewers in an exchange that has the potential to be more to the point and more intimate than a video screening. Media producers and HIV/AIDS service organizations are recognizing that, despite the current high production costs and technical obstacles to distribution, HIV/AIDS software programs may offer useful new strategies for media outreach, communication, activism, and education.

Many new commercial interactive software releases in CD-ROM and laserdisc formats are little more than translations of existing educational printed matter (textbooks or reference materials, for example) into a digital format. Although these programs may provide convenient features, like random-access indexing (through a computer word search, for instance) or in-text digitized video clips, the concept of interactivity they offer too often remains entrenched in models of rote learning, where "choice" becomes simply a matter of choosing the right answer, deciding among limited options, or being able to leave a comment on a message board. HIV/AIDS computer media by independents so far has not fallen into this trap. The three safer-sex and HIV/AIDS programs discussed in this article rework and transform the conventions of interactivity that we find in commercial software. They offer experiences that are engaging and informative not because they offer more choice or more viewer control, but because they provide a pleasurable fantasy of interaction and a kind of virtual intimacy, inviting users to play out roles within a narrative that is modeled after their own cultural experiences.

Brothers

Just prior to the BAVC/NTFAP collaboration on the 1993 Brothers interactive game, a study was released by the University of California that showed knowledge about risk doesn't translate into safer-sex practices. Based on a sample of approximately 1,000 self-identified gay, bisexual, and transgendered black men, this study revealed that while 97 percent knew how the HIV virus is transmitted, only 54 percent consistently engaged in safer-sex practices. So when BAVC and NTFAP set out to produce an educational program, their aim was not to teach the facts, but to create a fictional (and more comfortable) environment that would invite users to creatively devise, enact, and rehearse safer sexual behavior. The Brothers' Network acted as a content expert, while BAVC's Interact Program provided a team of 10 interns to help design the interface. The idea was to translate role-playing games that had proven effective in risk-reduction workshops into scripted narratives with multiple pathways for user interaction.

Brothers, which began as a prototype laserdisc called *Hot, Horny, and Healthy*, invites participation in simulated encounters with a range of fictional characters. These characters are scripted to express a diversity of sexual preferences and perspectives on safer sex. Their dialogue is very nuanced and, like any real people, they may express ambiguous or inconsistent views in the course of conversation. By scripting in nuance and mixed messages, the producers of Brothers avoid stereotyping and didacticism. As Tony Glover, director of the Brothers' Network, notes, "Each of the characters in the Brothers interactive dating game is well-rounded and developed with different psychological motivations in mind." For example, Jealousy, a transgendered character, makes statements about safer sex that are not programmatic, but embody ambiguity and emotion. She says that she never has unsafe sex—"except when tempted by the heat of the moment." Clearly, Jealousy's position is no model for safer-sex practice. However, if users bring out her impulsive side, a safer-sex diva crashes the encounter to offer commentary, words of caution, and suggestions for the user to take responsibility for safer sex.

Clearly, the interactive component of *Brothers* is not limited to one-on-one encounters between an individual user and the character(s) chosen on the touch-screen. But the safer-sex diva is not the only third party in the game. Set up in public spaces such as bars, the game invites joking and casual conversations about the issues it raises. The NTFAP hopes the arcade game will function like its role-playing workshops, initiating open discussion of topics that people usually negotiate in private.

So far, only one *Brothers* kiosk has been produced, but it has been a big hit wherever it has been installed. BAVC and the Brothers' Network targeted gay clubs, bars, and organizations frequented by black men as the first sites for the project. Since it is unlikely that neighborhood software dealers will market the program any time soon, the NTFAP is seeking to produce kiosks for other U.S. cities. They also hope to make specially designed kiosks to be installed in public spaces (for example, along the Castro in San Francisco), much like bank machines. These erotic ATMs, set up in various cities around the nation, would display different narrowcast programs—that is, narratives and characters would be designed to correspond with the interests and tastes of gay men living in particular geographical areas and socializing in specific gay subcultures.

Think Positive

Another group involved in the production of HIV/AIDS interactives is the Arts Technology Centre (ARTEC), an East London nonprofit that offers training to individuals and community-based groups. Like BAVC, ARTEC began by producing one-off interactive works requiring specialized exhibition equipment and site-specific installation. One such project is the 1993 *Sex Gets Serious*, a production for urban youth made in collaboration with youth-theater groups and the Birmingham, England-based nonprofit arts organization Jubilee Arts, and sponsored by the Sandwell Area Health Authority in Birmingham. Installed in neighborhood spaces such as the Sandwell Clinic, *Sex Gets Serious* invites users to navigate virtual streets, buses, and interior spaces. In the FAB (Females Answer Back) Room, for instance, one can

listen to music or view video clips, posters, and artwork produced by other youth on HIV/AIDS related topics.

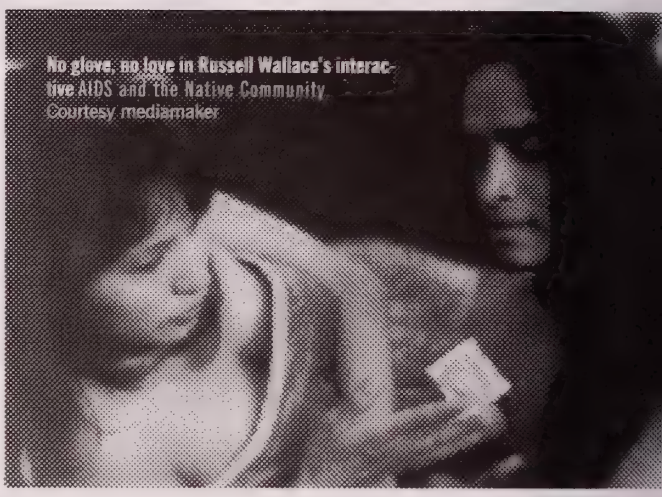
Sex Gets Serious was a big hit with young users, inspiring ARTEC to embark on a more elaborate interactive with funding from the East London and City Health Promotion Services. Currently being tested, Think Positive will be available to schools on CD-ROM where it can be used by 11-to-16-year olds. Think Positive is staged in two spaces: a virtual café, which is a social space made up of a number of connected rooms populated by hip characters and high-tech, cursor-activated objects; and a comic-book world that can be entered either by following or assuming the identity of a particular character. To get into the café, users log in with a doorperson by providing their name or pseudonym, age, and gender. This information determines some of the characteristics of the program's Help guidance tool, such as the gender of the narrative voice. There are five areas within the cafe: the Holodeck, the Chill-Out Room, a reference room, a mezzanine, and a reception area. The Holodeck is a high-tech cyberspace zone where users can access the Metamedia audiomobile (a safer-sex sound-bite device), VideoPositive (a place for visual media on HIV transmission), and areas for a one-on-one discussion with an advisor. The Chill-Out Room is a space for interactive-music jam sessions on songs about HIV issues, where the user has the option of eliciting solos from particular musicians in the room. Aspects of the dialogue and events throughout the program are keyed to the actual time of day or season. Each time users log on, the events are different, and if a user visits the café repeatedly, the characters become more chummy—they recall past interactions.

Ro Rai, coordinator of ARTEC's multimedia workshop, notes that the design team adapted the idea of the navigable environment from some of the most engaging commercial entertainment products currently available in the U.K. (such as *Virtual Night Club*, by Trip Media). "The real challenge," Pai explains, "was to make contacts and understand the actual context in which this sort of project can be used." ARTEC worked with youth at several schools, getting feedback on current CD-I, CD-ROM, and laserdisc products as well as HIV/AIDS pamphlets and videotapes. *Think Positive*'s design was based in part on students' reactions to these programs. For example, many students felt it was important to specify their gender, sexuality, and race and also wanted to be able to express aspects of their particular communities and subcultures. These desires are accommodated in the narratives of the comic books, for example, which are about youth whose personalities reflect a range of sexualities, cultures, and personal tastes. Entwined plots bring up critical issues that users might face in daily life, allowing them to negotiate actions and solutions by taking on the viewpoints of a variety of characters in various circumstances.

The British health authorities aren't alone in recognizing the possibilities of reaching youth with new media. Closer to home, the New York State Department of Health has commissioned several AIDS/HIV interactive projects. These include an interactive dating game called *Life Challenge*, a kiosk that travels to sites that service sexually active adolescents, and a slick hypercard stack called *CondomSense*, which is available at no charge for Mac and IMB platforms.

AIDS and the Native American Community

Healing Our Spirit, a First Nation theater group in British Columbia, has produced performances that deal with issues such as homelessness and HIV/AIDS. A new addition to their repertoire is the interactive *AIDS and the Native Community*, a program produced by Canadian First Nation actor, performer, and composer Russell Wallace. Work with Healing Our Spirit provided Wallace with support and input from a broad range of AIDS service and advocacy resources. The interactive opens with music and voice-over narration, which states: "In every society, there are things that get passed on from generation to generation: language, traditions, culture. But there are things that we don't want passed on. One of those is a disease called AIDS."


No glove, no love in Russell Wallace's interactive AIDS and the Native Community
Courtesy mediamaker

This line signals the program's overall approach. *AIDS and the Native Community* discusses HIV/AIDS within the context of native cultural values. Employing graphic iconography, music, photography, and oral testimony, Wallace draws on contemporary Native culture to address his audience in ways that tie the issue to users' own life experiences. The interface is based on what Wallace refers to as "the cycle of healing." Clicking on different quadrants within a circular graphic leads users to areas devoted to information on four topics: What Is AIDS?; Prevention; Resources (for the Native American community); and Being Positive (testimony of Native people with AIDS). The information provided in each area is framed within broader concerns of Native communities. For example, What Is AIDS? presents mechanisms of transmission that include tattooing, ritual cutting, body piercing, and "anal (bum) sex." The same section also includes a sequence titled Native POV (Point of View), which highlights cofactors in transmission such as alcohol, substance abuse, and sexual abuse.

Wallace points out that there are numerous obstacles for educators in the Native community. Foremost is the tendency to see AIDS as a white disease. "Native peoples are already overwhelmed by social and economic problems that they perceive as more immediate," he explains. The program uses oral narrative and music to convey the growing prevalence of HIV infection among Native peoples. HIV/AIDS is presented as a problem immediately tied to other concerns within the community, such as alcohol, drug abuse, and poverty.

Much of the intended audience for Wallace's program lives in rural areas, places where it would be difficult to transport a multimedia set up. When showing *AIDS and the Native Community*, Wallace needs to bring the software, a computer, and a hard drive. The program fits onto a SyQuest removable drive, but it is conceived as a prototype for the more easily distributed CD-ROM format. It is only a matter of time before these new media forms are more commonly available. Wallace sees his work as akin to the work of early videographers, people working before the VCR and camcorder became consumer items. The growth of networks for communication and education across geographically isolated regions (networked classrooms, for example) suggests that venues for this type of work are forthcoming.

Brian Goldfarb is an educator and media activist who has recently curated an exhibition of health-care media, called Digital Check-Up, for the Visual Studies Workshop.

THE ART OF THE INTERNET

Why and How You Should Get ON

BY LUKE MATTHEW HONES

Over 20 years ago, in his book *Expanded Cinema*, Gene Youngblood said, "The intermedia network of cinema and television... now functions as nothing less than the nervous system of mankind." His words are still compelling—and nerve-racking—as we watch cinema and television link up with communications.

In the early 1970s—a time when when San Francisco's PBS station KQED housed the National Center for Experiments in Television, 1/2-inch portapaks jump started a "hand-held" revolution, and the guerilla TV collectives Raindance Corporation, Videofreex, and Video Free America tested the limits of television—another form of electronic communications was coming to life. The ARPAnet (Advanced Research Projects Agency network) was being funded by the Department of Defense. This project would eventually become the Internet, aka the "information superhighway."

The media arts world that evolved from those early days has been a place for political activists, artists, and eccentrics. The Internet and on-line services, originally populated by scientists, engineers, and academics, have also become a haven for political activists, artists, and eccentrics. These parallel universes have been key defenders of freedom of expression, including public access to new communication technologies.

The Internet is an international network of computer networks, roamed by an estimated 15 million people. One can't subscribe directly; this global web has no central office or business address. Most commercial on-line services, such as America Online, CompuServe, the WELL (Whole Earth Electronic Link), ECHO (East Coast Hang Out), and Arts Wire have made access to the Internet an important part of what they provide their customers. By calling them, you can find out how to get an account that includes an Internet connection (ask whether it's full access or just for electronic mail). The base fee for an on-line account is around $20 per month. Many media arts organizations have accounts with either Arts Wire or America Online, including the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), 911 in Seattle, the Video Data Bank in Chicago, Intermedia Arts in Minneapolis, and the Bay Area Video Coalition in San Francisco.

If one works at or attends a university, access is usually free through the school's Internet connection. Those outside the ivory tower can go through a number of small services that have sprung up specifically to provide an on-ramp to the Internet, such as Panix (212-877-4854), MindVOX (212-988-5987), and Netcom (408-554-8649).

Until now, the media arts and Internet communities, while sharing common interests, have remained apart. But the time when worlds collide is at hand: Bell Atlantic, Baby Bell, and Tele-Communications Inc., the country's largest cable TV company, have recently announced an intended merger. Sony Pic-

tures has begun testing a new film distribution method, transmitting *Bram Stoker's Dracula* to theaters via a fiber-optic telephone line. The Internet now has a live radio program. In May 1993, the independent film *Wax: Or the Discovery of Television among the Bees*, by David Blair, was the first feature-length film broadcast internationally via the Internet.

These efforts are basic research for what is to come. The convergence of media and telecommunications is commonplace today in the audio industry, which is often a proving ground for new technology and a harbinger for film and video. The title of an article in the October issue of *MIX* magazine says it all: "Global Audio. Telecommuting in the '90s." (*MIX* is essential reading for mediamakers looking for a technological crystal ball.) Using wide area networks (WANs) for audio production is a necessity, and facilities must offer it to stay competitive.

Until film and video catch up to audio, what can computer on-line services do for you? They can connect you with a source of uncensored information. Ideally, a greater understanding of the Internet and online communications will give independent mediamakers a chance to affect the future of digital, computer-based telecommunications while it is still in the cocoon.

What do you need to go on-line? First, you need a computer with a modem and a telephone line. While most everyone is familiar with computers and phone connections, the modem is an exotic piece of equipment. Modems (MOdulators-DEModulators) are digital-to-analog and analog-to-digital converters. Computers are digital machines, and traditionally telephone lines carry analog signals. To transfer the digital signals from one computer over a telephone line to another computer, there's a conversion and reconversion process: The modem connected to the transmitting machine converts the computer's digital ones and zeros to analog bleeps and blips, which are relayed over the telephone lines. Then on the other end, the receiver's modem converts the bleeps and blips back into ones and zeros and sends the now digital signal to the receiving computer.

These modems can either be connected to the serial port of your computer (external modems), or they may be installed inside the computer case (internal modems). Many of the newer modems also operate as fax machines, so you can send and receive faxes at your computer. Modem prices start around $150 for internal and $70 for external. If you are buying a modem, it should be at least 2400 bps, but the current standard is now 14,400 bps.

You'll need communications software to use the modem. Nowadays most modems include software as part of the package. Still, at this point in its development, communications software for computers is not intuitive. Even when using a Macintosh, a modem user must set the parameters for baud rate, parity, data bits, stop bits, local echo, etcetera. It takes patience, study, and trial and error, but probably no more than mastering camera registration, depth of field calculation, or lighting.

Right now, once you're on the Internet, you are not going to find a friendly user interface. In fact, as Brendan Kehoe says in *Zen and the Art of the Internet*, "The Net still has what John Perry Barlow terms a 'savage user interface,' and some amount of hand-holding is needed to guide people through the rough spots." Odds are you'll do lots of typing and need to learn a new computer operating system: UNIX. Surely this will change over time, as entrepreneurs develop alternative navigational tools. But at this stage, the Internet is where television was in the 1930s or cinema in the late nineteenth century; designed by engineers and troublemakers. You are getting in on the ground floor.

For guidance and hand-holding, there are some very good books and magazine resources. Two helpful books on using the Internet are Kehoe's *Zen and the Art of the Internet* (Prentice Hall, 1993) and Ed Krol's *The Whole Internet User's Guide and Catalog* (O'Reilly & Associates, 1993). Both are guides for moving around the Internet and also provide lists of other resources. While *BYTE* and other computer magazines provide a lot of technical and practical information about going on-line, there may also be some useful free magazines in your area. In the San Francisco Bay area, for instance, *Computer Currents* is published twice monthly and Microtimes monthly; both are full of information about online communications.

One other book I'd recommend is *The Cuckoo's Egg*, by Cliff Stoll (Simon and Schuster, 1990). This is not a user guide, but tells the true story of a mystery that is unravelled on the Internet by Stoll, a Berkeley astronomer. By tracking down a 75-cent discrepancy in his Internet bill, Stoll eventually breaks up an espionage ring. Also recounted in the book is the tale of the "Internet Worm," a virus that destroyed data and shut down computers all across the country. In the process of storytelling, The Cuckoo's Egg helps the uninitiated understand how the Internet works.

So, you've got a computer and a modem hooked up to a telephone line. The next thing to do is decide who to connect to. Probably the tool most often used on the Internet is email, or electronic mail. You have probably noticed the email addresses that have begun to appear on business cards and mailings. For instance, in NAMAC's November newsletter, *MAIN*, NAMAC's return address includes two new lines:

namac@tmn.com
namac@aol.com

These are two email addresses. In English they mean: NAMAC located on (@) The Meta Network (tmn), which carries Arts Wire. This is a commercial domain (com). The second address is for NAMAC's America Online (aol) email mailbox, also a commercial (com) domain. Other common-domain suffixes are edu (education), org (private organization), net (network), mil (military), and gov (government).

You can use an email system to conveniently send the same message to a number of receivers. If your colleagues or constituents are on-line, email is a quick way to get information out. If you get involved with an on-line discussion group, it also gives other participants a way to get in touch with you.

The other key activities when you are on-line are participating in news groups and searching databases. Both can be incredible

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Email (Private Messages)
Menu

1  List email
2  Read new email
3  Read email
4  Send email
5  Delete email
6  Send email to Arts
Wire Network Coordinator
0  Return to Action Menu

AND NOW? (Enter 0-6):
(0) 3

Read which email mes-
sages ?

1  New messages
2  All messages
3  Select message(s)
0  Return to Email menu

Enter 0-3: (1)  3

Enter the message number
or range you want to
read: 49

(49)

SUBJECT: Re:Manuscript
MESSAGE   from
=gdfb@troi.cc.rochester.
edu
11-NOV-93 12:56
From: Brian Goldfarb
<gdfb@troi.cc.rochester.
edu>
Date: Wed, 10 Nov 1993
16:04:33 -0500

Pat,

I just emailed another
copy of the manuscript.
If you get this note,
but not the manuscript,
then it could mean that
it is being held up
because the message is
so long. Anyway, bounce
me back a message if you
receive this before the
manuscript (in which
case we could just transfer
the file directly via modem)

Brian Goldfarb
```

resources for independent producers and media arts activists.

Besides the major on-line services, there are over 65,000 mom-and-pop computer bulletin board services (BBSs) out there. These BBSs are computers and modems set up in someone's home or business, and often are pegged to particular interests. These computers are probably not hooked up with a larger system and thus do not provide Internet access. When you dial their number with your modem, a menu appears (there may be a user fee), and you interact with the system. An example of a free bulletin board service is one run by the Editors Special Interest Groups (ESIG), an organization whose members work at various postproduction facilities in the San Francisco Bay area. By calling (415) 705-0185, you can choose from various "conferences" or "news groups" about such topics as Multimedia, Film to Tape, Time Code, Tape Stock, Job Opportunities, and more. Once selected, you can scroll through (and download to print out) people's comments on the topic. You can also add an entry under any one of these topics either by asking a question of the experts or helping to troubleshoot someone else's problem.

BBS news groups allow you to gather news and to join in the discussion. Topics are often at several levels of detail. After connecting to a BBS, for instance, you may browse through a general discussion of video, delve into the Video Toaster news group, and probably even get into a lively discussion about troubleshooting new software on older systems. The Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) recently gathered research and commentary for a closed-captioning grant proposal from a deaf news group's discussion on captioning.

A number of on-line services are geared toward film- and videomakers and/or artists. Arts Wire (tel: 212-233-3900, ext. 212) and the Video Network (tel: 401-848-9454) come with two-way email, classifieds, and message posting. The Mediamakers on-line Service (tel: 800-283-7550) offers production resources (crew, talent, location guide, and equipment resources) and a calendar of industry events. Technet is a new nonprofit BBS for professionals in audio, video, film, broadcast, interactive media, and related fields. Its central feature is its Job Board for technically oriented job listings (Box 3024, New York, NY 10185). In addition, media topics play an important role on many of the larger on-line services. Sam Spooner of High Peak Engineering uses CompuServe's Broadcast Engineers Forum to query other engineers on technical issues. He says SMPTE is also on CompuServe. The WELL has both video and film forums. For more general audiences, America Online has a "Hollywood on-line" corner, which includes QuickTime previews of the latest Hollywood releases and a variety of discussion groups on topics ranging from "The Worst Films Ever Made" to Richard Linklater's *Dazed and Confused.*

Specialized bulletin boards provide a central place to sort out the issues common to everyone in the field. A comprehensive national listing of bulletin boards can be found in *Boardwatch Magazine* (8500 W. Bowles Ave., Ste. 210, Littleton CO 80123; 303-973-6038).

These smaller bulletin boards are like community radio stations, reflecting the focus of a small community. The Internet, on the other hand, is more like a worldwide library and/or social club. According to the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, the Internet was one of the few uncensored outlets for nonofficial information about the Gulf War. It also carried dispatches from Sarajevo. An article in the October 1993 issue of *BYTE* was an Internet dispatch describing Iran's computer market, which noted that "Microsoft is also developing a version of Windows that is capable of handling the right-to-left Persian script."

The Internet provides a wealth of information for mediamakers working on documentaries. There are databases on practically every topic (physics, special education, dance, Star Trek, etc.). Plus many library catalogs are on-line. For instance, you can look up a book in the Library of Congress' database by author, title, or subject.

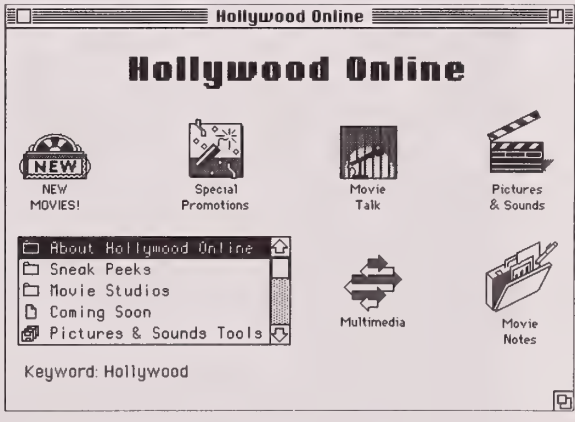
A media-specific database that will soon be making the move to the Internet is the National Moving Image Database (NAMID), which has over 150,000 records of films and videotapes. Significantly, Margaret Byrne, NAMID's administrator, has consistently sought to include independent media in this database, receiving records of videos and films from media arts centers and distributors like Electronic Arts Intermix. Along with getting the NAMID database on Internet, NAMID is in the early stages of developing software that will allow producers to register projects in the database as they are completed. The potential of this database as a tool for distribution or stock footage sale is enormous. It also may be an effective way of articulating the scope of work done in the media arts.

There are a number of activist groups trying to keep on-line communications as accessible as possible. Thus far, much of the Internet's on-line information and, even, software is free for the taking. Not surprisingly, commercial services are attempting to move in—and are being met with resistence. In California, activists are trying to keep information pertaining to public legislation available to the public. The Legislative Data Center, as the initiative is known, is combatting information services such as Legi-Tech, which charges $175 per hour for public legislative information.

In Washington, the Center for Media Education (CME) has been funded by the Pew Charitable Trust to help nonprofits with the upcoming technological transition. The CME will soon begin to publish a monthly newsletter on telecommunication issues for the nonprofit community. CME is located at 1511 K St. NW, Ste. 518, Washington DC 20005. If you are trying out the Internet, their address is cme@access.digex.net.

Finally, the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) has lobbied for a responsible future for telecommunications, which takes the public interest into account [see EFF profile, "Talking Heads,' November 1993]. EFF is located at 1001 G St. NW, Ste. 950 East, Washington DC 20001. On the Internet, they are at eff@eff.org.

Mitch Kapor, cofounder of EFF, spoke out in the July 4, 1993, issue of the *San Francisco Examiner:* "We have to start thinking now about what we want this information superhighway to do and how it is going to be operated."



As reporter Tom Abate writes, paraphrasing Kapor, "Will there be 'on-ramps' for citizens to put their ideas on the road, allowing electronic town meetings to occur? Or will the buzzword of 'interactivity' mean pointing a TV remote at the screen to order pizzas or play video games with one's neighbors?"

The on-line community is fighting to have a voice in this future. Does the independent media community want a voice as well?

Luke Matthew Hones is program director for the Bay Area Video Coalition in San Francisco and is currently developing computer on-line projects for BAVC

THE MBONE'S CONNECTED TO THE BACKBONE

Video on the Internet

PATRICIA THOMSON

Jacking in, you connect with Mission Control. On your computer screen, the space shuttle astronauts are bobbing in zero gravity, going about their tasks with quiet, cryptic commentary.

Science fiction? Not anymore. NASA's space shuttle feed is a reality on the Internet's digital-video channel, called MBONE. Although the Internet is primarily used for text-based communications, video can now be transmitted over the global network.

Of the various options now in use, the most sophisticated is MBONE (for "multicasting backbone"). No downloaded video files here; MBONE carries audio and video in a live, continuous multicast. Because of the extraordinary bandwidth this requires, receiving MBONE is something you can't try at home with a puny phone-line connection. Currently only several thousand university centers and research labs can log onto MBONE, according to Paul Jones, an MBONE user at the University of North Carolina's Office of Information Technology. "It goes through the [Internet's] backbone to most of the important sites on the net," he explains. In addition to a fat Internet connection, one needs the necessary software (which can be found via anonymous ftp on SunSITE.unc.edu in pub/packages/infosystems/mbone). And one must have a powerful workstation. "It takes a UNIX machine—Silicon Graphics, Hewlett Packard, Sun, DEC," says Jones. "And you actually have to reconfigure the kernel of your UNIX to support it."

Unlike a broadcast channel, MBONE's multicasting capabilities allow users to call up multiple video windows at the same time. Originally designed as a video conferencing tool for researchers too busy to travel to professional gatherings, MBONE continues to be used primarily as a way for individuals to see each other and share images. Astronomers, for example, use MBONE to have Gopher-style access to each other's digitized visual databases and to "meet" to discuss the same picture together. Although it involves visualization, MBONE is closer to a telephone model or the Internet's MUDs (multi-user domains) than it is to the 500-channel television model.

Some of MBONE's feeds are continuous. Others are special events, as were the proceedings in November of the Internet Engineering Task Force's conference. "They are the people who really run the Internet, who write the code, the laws of the net," says Jones. Or on October 12, one could catch what was believed to be the first appearance of President Clinton on the Internet. "We knew that Clinton was coming to the university [to speak]," recalls Jones, who organized the netcast, "and we thought it would be interesting to involve the national information highway in this." Jones brought in several collaborators, including Sun Microsystems, which was developing a new video board at the time; the local public television station WUNC-TV, whose cameras provided the video feed (old-fashioned couch potatoes could tune into the President on public TV); and the MCNC Center for Communications, a public-private partnership connected to the university, which provided a direct link to the Internet backbone.

If neither the space shuttle, the President, nor the Internet engineers strike one's fancy, MBONE inevitably has other options to choose from. "It has a tool like a current *TV Guide*

continued on page 60

THE MBONE'S CONNECTED TO THE BACKBONE

Wax, Discovery of TV Among the Bees was the first feature-length fiction video that went out over the Internet. Courtesy mediamaker



80 Million Channels and Nothing On

VIDEO ON DEMAND

CLAY GORDON

The upcoming television and telecommunications revolution will have no less profound an impact on society than did Henry Ford's assembly line. By the end of the first decade of the next millennium, virtually every

business and household in America will have access to hundreds of times more communications bandwidth than is currently available to all broadcast communications.

While this revolution is usually referred to in terms of 500 channels, to think in terms of conventional channels is limiting. Today, pay-per-view "near video on demand" systems use excess channel capacity to schedule the same movie on several channels with staggered starting times. This makes it possible for viewers to choose when they want to watch a movie in the same way they get to choose at what time to see a film playing on several screens at the local nineplex. Although there will be more freedom to choose viewing times, there is still only a limited number of movies that can be shown, even if there are 500 screens.

True video on demand (VOD) systems will work over communications networks that operate on the same access and switching principles as the telephone system. Rather than the remote control just being a simple channel changer, VOD remotes will provide viewers with direct access to a wide variety of programming stored as compressed digital video on special computers called video servers. It will still be possible to watch conventionally scheduled network programming, but viewers will also be able to browse the aisles of the local blockbuster-hits digital-video store and preview programs right on their TV screens. If they can't find anything to watch there, they can switch to video stores that cater to special interests. The ultimate effect of VOD will be to put the final decision of what to watch—and when to watch it—in the hands and remote controls of viewers. Instead of having 500 channels, there will be 280-million channels: everybody will get to program their own.

By replacing one-way broadcast and cable transmission with interactive dial-up access to programming stored on video servers, the networks' and cable programmers' almost total control over what can be transmitted into viewers' homes will be largely eliminated. By eliminating channel capacity constraints, many of the barriers to utilizing television as a distribution medium will fall.

It is too early to know exactly who will own and operate these VOD networks, but the changes in the industry that are reflected by the creation of new alliances—such as the ones between Bell Atlantic (a telephone company) and TCI (TeleCommunications Inc., the largest cable operator in the U.S.) and between USWest (a telephone company) and Time Warner (a programmer, distributor, and cable-systems operator)—indicate that it is very likely to be some combination of telephone and cable companies.

With the telephone companies' involvement in providing video over the telephone network (often referred to as video dialtone) comes the likelihood that, because of regulations requiring the phone companies to provide equal access to their networks, independent producers will, for the first time, enjoy equal access to a major programming distribution medium on the same terms as the movie studios and network and cable programmers. According to Alan Daley, director of Bell Atlantic's Network Services, "Video dialtone is regulated by the FCC, and everyone—not just major studios and cable companies, but independent producers as well—has access to our network under the same terms." While the FCC's video dialtone regulations allow Bell Atlantic to deploy lines and equipment into homes, they do not permit the phone company (a "common carrier") to determine or veto what programming is carried over its video dialtone networks.

Until recently, Bell Atlantic had been prohibited from being a content provider as a result of the 1984 Cable Act and the antitrust lawsuit that broke up Ma Bell into AT&T and the seven regional Bell operating companies. However, as a result of a court decision last fall in Alexandria, Virginia, Bell Atlantic is no longer prohibited from getting into the programming business as a packager and content creator. In essence, Bell Atlantic could become competition to independents interested in distributing programming via VOD.

Even if Bell Atlantic were to become a programmer, Daley sees an affinity between Bell Atlantic and independent producers: "Within Bell Atlantic there is a receptivity to the fact that a number of different approaches [to programming] will need to be supported. We do plan to make space available for independent productions as well as twenty thousand or so mainstream movies. [We] may offer our own programming just as any cable operator might, but in many cases it's far more appropriate for professionals to develop content and for Bell Atlantic to collaborate with them to make it available."

Robin Smith is an independent producer who will have two of her programs, *Shooting Back*, a documentary incorporating photography by homeless children, and *Who's Gonna Sing Our Song?*, a documentary about a multimedia history project, available on Bell Atlantic's VOD trial in Arlington, Virginia. Smith became aware of the Arlington trial through her work with Bell Atlantic on its Community Services Network project in which 200 social-service agencies and health care providers in Washington, D.C., are going to be linked in a nonbroadcast network. She is excited about the possibilities opened up by VOD technology. "At the moment," Smith says, "Independents' work is usually relegated to nonprime-time hours or to news programming where only short segments are ever seen. By eliminating time and channel constraints, video dialtone is a way to break down barriers, to put independent producers back on the field again. However, even if time and channel constraints are eliminated, my films are going to be included in the trial along with commercial fare. The challenge will be to tell viewers that these types of programs are available."

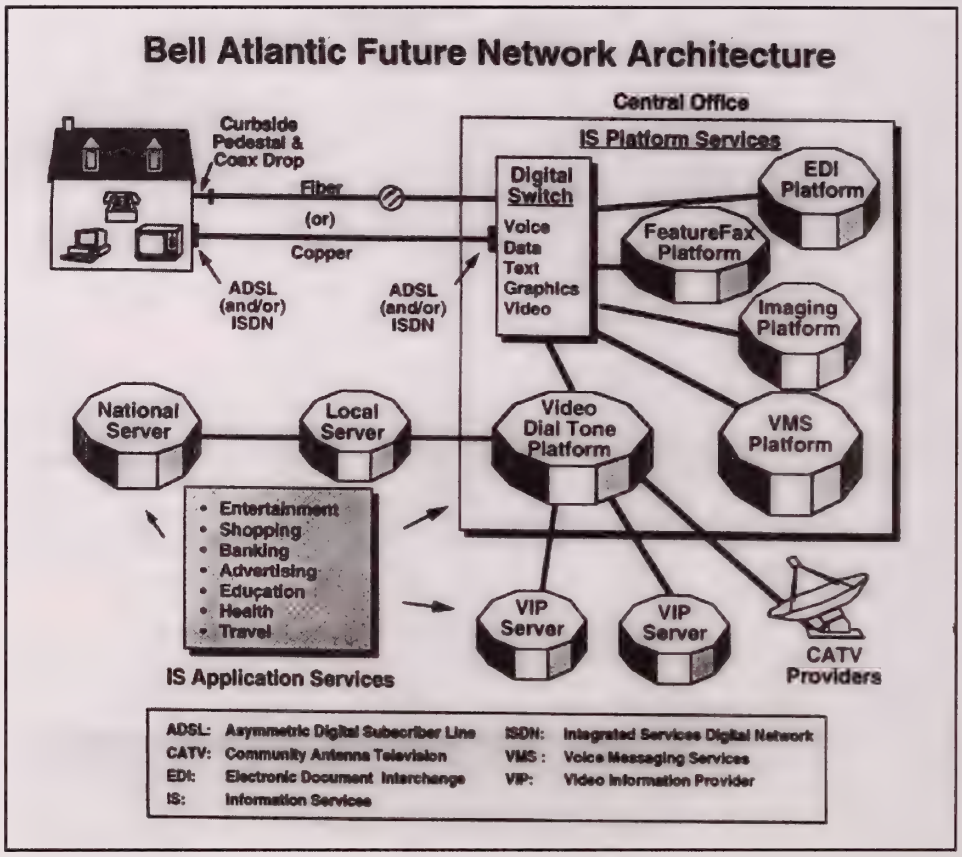
Jim McBride, a New York-based technology writer and independent producer, also believes that there is a role for independently produced programming over video dialtone networks, but "Effective promotion will be the big key, not only just for feature programs, but for any type of program," he predicts. "In the video dialtone universe, the successful independents will be those who focus on specific markets with focused product. In many respects it will be like the magazine business, with titles aimed at niche markets supported by micro-marketing."

According to Mike Morrison, manager of Advanced Operations Testing, a division of GTE Telephone Operations, "VOD can be very specialized. Our Cerritos, California, trial currently programs about 25 entertainment titles each month, and there are about 200 educational titles available." Under a waiver from the FCC relaxing cross-ownership regulations that prohibit a single company from providing telephone and cable service in the same community, GTE turned to an outside firm, McDermott & Associates of Pasadena, California, to create the package of program offerings for the trial. Maggie McDermott, who started her entertainment career at MGM/UA handling sales to cable operators for pay-per-view and began packaging programming for the Cerritos trial in 1989, says: "We purchase about 25 entertainment titles each month, and anywhere from two to five of them are independently produced. With only 20 channels of network to program in the trial, there's more programming than channels. At the moment, 'shelf space' is at a premium."

McDermott & Associates acquires programming from a wide variety of sources, including the studios, larger independent distributors such as New Line/Fine Line and Miramax, and smaller independent producers that McDermott identifies, to a large extent, by word of mouth. "Having 500 channels," continues McDermott, "bodes well for independents, because there will finally be room for independent documentaries, animation, and features. In video dialtone networks, access to distribution will no longer be controlled by the bottleneck of channel capacity."

However, in order to reach audiences, independents are going to have to evolve their marketing strategies using promotion, direct mail, and niche-oriented magazines. "The common carriers are only going to be successful [with video dialtone] to the extent that others are successful," says McDermott. "Programmers will have to learn to define audiences as subsets of a community. During the Barcelona Summer Olympics, NBC tried pay-per-view and found it difficult to reach audiences with access to pay-per-view cable channels, let alone the people interested in fringe sports like archery. Special interest networks can only be supported by being able to find and sustain niche audiences."

While there are rules that prohibit telephone companies from giving or selling demographic information to third parties, this information can be used by them to target promotions directly to viewers most likely to be interested in various kinds of programming. Says GTE's Morrison: "GTE can really benefit independent producers because we can also help with the marketing of their products. In a sense, GTE wants to become a value-added common carrier, with the capability to help independents and other packagers with promotion, and GTE has already developed policy in this areas." GTE has been experimenting in Cerritos with ways of getting programming information to viewers. Examples of targeted promotional activities include flyers and coupons inserted into telephone bills, in addition to placement in printed monthly guides and online guides.



For the consumer, there are likely be two components to the cost of receiving VOD programming. The first charge is for the network access time to view the program, and the second is for the value of the content itself. In all likelihood, there will be tiered access to the video dialtone network just as there now is for cable, with access to many services provided for a basic monthly fee and fee-for-use access to everything else. It is expected that the majority of VOD movie programming will be priced at a small premium over video-store rental prices.

While there are several routes by which independents are most likely to gain access to video dialtone networks, the basic process is the same: Space is leased on a network's video server. The cost of the lease is determined by the length of the program. Information about the program is inserted in the network's online electronic program guide, and for additional fees, supplemental marketing services can be purchased.

One access route for independent producers will be through packagers hired by the common carriers to develop program offerings. McDermott & Associates, which has been acting as a packager for GTE's Cerritos trial, has been negotiating short term—30- to 60-day—licenses strictly on a commission basis. Program rentals are typically split 50/50, and there is a minimum payment due the producer for each buy of the program. (Commission splits and minimums are likely to be negotiating points when VOD becomes a commercial reality.)

Another route will be through the new distribution companies that will undoubtedly be formed specifically to package programming concepts for distribution via VOD. One of the primary roles of these independent VOD distributors will be to act as brokers, leasing large quantities of space from VOD providers and then reselling them at discounted rates to individuals and small companies.

Still a third access route will be through distributors currently handling independent programming who decide to package independent programming for VOD distribution, developing packages not only for local exhibition, but for television markets all across the country. Producers could go to one of these independent VOD packagers and ask questions like: I want to reach the following target viewing audience, and I have so much budgeted. What's my best media buy? The packager would place the programming in selected markets. Film festival organizers could use such a packager to help simultaneously preview films to audiences outside their geographic areas. Ambitious VOD packagers could even purchase their own video server and create an "Indie Channel," so that independent producers and audiences living outside the major film centers can enjoy a New York or Los Angeles screening schedule.

A fourth route will be for independents to negotiate with the common carriers directly. GTE, for example, has both local and national sales forces in place and appears ready to make those resources available to anybody interested in placing and promoting programs locally, regionally, and nationally. Mike Morrison anticipates: "When producers approach GTE, they will be able to discuss not only the costs of placing a program on a GTE video server, but also the details of marketing plans to inform viewers of the programs' availability online."

The many trials that are currently underway around the country are designed not only to help solve the technical issues relating to video dialtone, VOD, and other interactive television services, but to better understand what viewers want and how much they are likely to pay for these new services.

Because of the very small number of homes in GTE's Cerritos trial (4,300) and the skewed population sample in Bell Atlantic's

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Arlington trial (400 homes, all Bell Atlantic employees), it is impossible to reliably determine from them how much the true costs of gaining access to VOD servers will be, nor is it possible to determine what independent producers can expect to earn through VOD distribution. Furthermore, too few people are involved in the current trials to develop reliable statistics for the VOD viewing habits of Americans in general.

How long it will be before video dialtone is available in a significant percentage of American households is anybody's guess. Jim McBride expects that it will take five to 10 years. Bell Atlantic's Alan Daley estimates that video dialtone will be available in its top 20 markets within five years. Pacific Bell announced in November that, using fiber optics, it will connect 1.5 million California homes by 1996 and another 2 million by the year 2000. While solutions to the technical problems that must be overcome to meet these time projections are large, the problems are, in fact, solvable. The same cannot be said for the regulatory and antitrust issues that need to be addressed.

The outcome of the antitrust and regulatory debates will affect not only how long it takes for video dialtone to become an everyday reality, but also the cost of delivering VOD services to everyone who wants them. Among the regulatory issues to be addressed is the dichotomy between local and long- distance telephone service. Bell Atlantic's territory is divided into 19 LATAs, or local access transport areas, in several states. By federal law, Bell Atlantic is prohibited from carrying messages between LATAs and across state lines—that's the province of the long-distance carriers and cable companies. If this state of affairs persists, it could mean that Bell Atlantic would be required to maintain separate, very expensive video servers for each LATA, thereby increasing the costs of providing VOD services to producers and consumers.

Also problematic is the issue of cross-ownership, which prohibits the same company from providing cable and telephone service to the same community. As this article was being completed, the FCC announced that it was rescinding the cross-ownerhip waiver GTE received in 1989 for its Cerritos trial, citing a federal court ruling that the FCC had not adequately justified why the waiver—the only one ever granted—was needed. The ruling, which takes effect in March, 1994, may seriously jeopardize any chance that cable and telephone company alliances will be the vehicle by which VOD services will be provided to consumers. Pacific Bell's ambitious plan to provide VOD rests on its ability to report Bell Atlantic's legal challenge to the cross-ownership regulations—so far only the only successful one. However, phone companies are legally allowed to provide new interactive services, such as telemedicine, that don't directly compete with what cable companies currently offer.

Will VOD make the television of the future a more democratic place? Certainly, it will seem so from the viewer's point of view. But it remains to be seen if the opportunities VOD promises will materialize for independent producers. The removal of channel capacity limitations does not automatically mean that more people will actually watch a given program; it simply means that the potential audience will be much larger. Producers will have to work just as hard—or even harder—to let audiences know that this new programming is available, that it's worth watching, and that it's worth paying for.



Laying down fiber-optic cable in Cerritos, California. Photos p. 34 & 38 courtesy GTE

The costs to the independent producer, community organizer, and social issue documentarian to lease space on video servers and gain access to the video dialtone networks will be the same as for the movie studios and cable companies. Ironically, the same provisions that require the phone companies to provide equal access also prohibit them from discriminating between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Unless the regulations are changed, the phone companies will continue to be restricted from offering special discounts to one group to the exclusion of others. Also absent from most discussions about VOD is talk about community access of the same sort that is required as a condition of the majority of cable franchises.

While many people are excited about the bold new frontier that VOD promises, no one knows exactly what it will mean for anyone, least of all for those program producers currently denied easy and regular access to conventional television distribution. VOD networks could be an independent producer's dream distribution medium, making it possible to inexpensively and profitably distribute any sort of programming to interested viewers all across the country. Unfortunately, questions concerning equal access and the costs of using the medium are lost in the battles over who gets to provide the services. About the only thing clear from the current tests is that, so far, the opportunities—as well as the rewards—for independent producers are limited.

Clay Gordon is a computer consultant and writer who has covered the computer-graphics field for the last 10 years.

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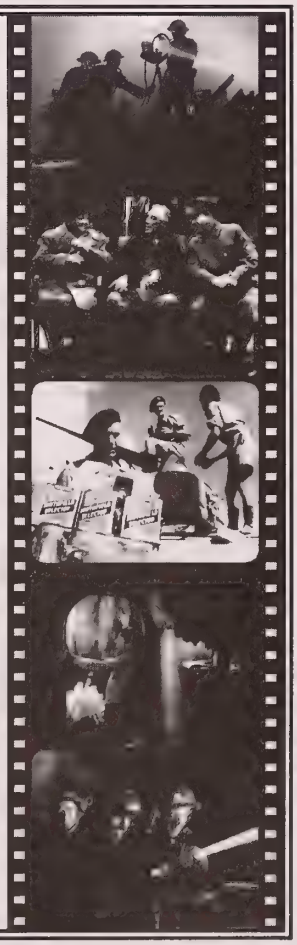
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DOMESTIC

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, July, NY. Sponsored by Asian CineVision, noncompetitive fest, founded in 1978, is country's oldest showcase for works by Asian & Asian American filmmakers. Films produced, directed &/or written by artists of Asian heritage eligible. Features & shorts in all cats accepted. Entries originally produced on film only; no video-to-film transfers. Asian-American Media Award to honored filmmaker. New this yr. are market and children's programming sections. After NY run, fest begins 10-mo. tour of N. America. Previous editions showcased 40 films from US, Canada, Australia, UK, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, China, Iran. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Minne Hong, Asian American Int'l Film Festival, Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, 4th fl., New York, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685; fax: 8157.

ATHENS CENTER FOR FILM & VIDEO seeks films & videos for 21st Athens International Film & Video Fest., May 8-13, OH. Works produced after 1991, in any category that embody a high level of artistic innovation, sensitivity to form & challenging subject matter will be considered. Works chosen for public screening will receive approximately $3/min. (w/ minimum of $50 & max. of $300). Entry fee: $20 & post-paid shipping (for return of video). For entry forms & further info, contact: Athens Center for Film & Video, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701; (614) 593-1330.

CHARLOTTE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, NC. Sponsored by Cablevision of Charlotte, fest is one of larger ind. film fests in Southeast. Last yr. it awarded $7,000 to ind. filmmakers. Jurors this yr. are Camille Billops & Tom Kalin. Screening locations incl. Spirit Sq. Ctr. for the Arts, Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County, Afro-American Cultural Center, Manor Theatre, Light Factory Photographic Arts Ctr. & Mint Museum of Art. Entry fee: $30, plus return postage. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Robert West, film curator, Charlotte Film & Video Festival, Mint Museum of Art, 2730 Randolph Rd., Charlotte, NC 28207; (704) 337-2000.

CINE GOLDEN EAGLE FILM AND VIDEO COMPETITION, February, DC. Nontheatrical films & videos (w/ exception of TV ads & spot announcements) eligible for competition. Golden Eagles awarded in following cats: amateur, agriculture, animation/children's, arts/crafts, business/industry, doc, educational, entertainment, shorts, nature/environmental, history, interactive, medicine, oceanography, public health, safety/training, science, services, sports, travel. Entries must be US prods. CINE enters some award winners in foreign fests. Entries judged by 800 film/video pros. Entrants should send appl. first & films/tapes when instructed. Entry fees: $45 & up. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Feb. 1 (also Aug. 1). Contact: Awards Director, CINE, 1001 Connecticut Ave., Ste. 638 NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 785-1136; fax: 4114.

CONNECTICUT GAY AND LESBIAN FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 3-11, CT. Sponsored by Alternatives, fest is held in Hartford & is now in 7th yr. Films/ videos that have gay or lesbian content or appeal are eligible; fest aims to be "as diverse, multicultural, informative & entertaining as possible." No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Feb. 28. Contact: Alternatives, c/o Tyler Polhemus, 51 Oxford St., Hartford, CT 06105; (203) 231-8558.

HOMETOWN USA VIDEO FESTIVAL, July, CA. Sponsored by Alliance for Community Media, this competitive fest, founded in 1977, recognizes outstanding local programs produced for or by local organizations & public, educational & gov't access operations. Awards: 4 special awards for overall excellence in public access, local origination, educational & gov't access; finalists, honorable mentions & winners in 37 cats, incl. performing arts; ethnic expression; entertainment; sports; by & for youth; live; municipal; religious; educational; instructional/training; informational; innovative; int'l; by & for seniors; PSA; event/public awareness; video art; music video; local news; magazine format; original teleplay. 1994 awards ceremony to be held in Honolulu at University of Hawaii. Entries must be produced in previous yr. Fest annually receives 2,000 entries. Deadline: Mar. 4. Contact: Randy Van Dalsen, Hometown USA Video Festival, The Buske Group, 2015 J St., Ste. 28, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 441-6277; fax: 7670.

HUMBOLDT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 11-16, CA. Oldest student-run film fest in the country (estab. in 1967), Humboldt provides showcase for student & ind. filmmakers. Films selected by student prescreening committee & judged by panel of professional filmmakers. Fest selections screened at oldest operating feature-film house in country, Minor Theatre. All genres accepted; entries must be under 60 min. & completed in last 3 yrs. Entry fee: $30. Formats: 16mm, S-8. Deadline (film entries): Mar. 11; (video, for preview only): Feb. 25. Contact: Humboldt Int'l Film Festival, Theater Arts Dept, Humboldt State Univ., Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-4113; fax: 5494.

JUDAH L. MAGNES MUSEUM VIDEO COMPETITION, April, CA. 1st annual Jewish video competition for innovative use of video in socially conscious Jewish themes. Entries must be on VHS from video original only. Deadline: Feb. 21 (for SASE for entry); Mar. 21 (videos to arrive). Contact: Bill Chayes, Video Competition, Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2911 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94705; (510) 549-6952.

LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, CA. Works by &/or about Asian Pacific & Asian Pacific American people, culture, history & experiences currently sought for 9th edition of this fest, cosponsored by Visual Communications & UCLA Film & Television Archive. Premiere showcase of works by Asian Pacific & Asian Pacific American filmmakers & video artists for southern CA audiences. Features, shorts, dramatic/narrative, documentary, experimental & animated works accepted. Entry fee: $5 (for return of preview cassette). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 31. Contact: Festival Co-coordinator, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival, Visual Communications, 263 So. Los Angeles St., Ste. 307, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462.

MONITOR AWARDS, July 16, CA. Sponsored by Int'l Teleproduction Society, an int'l trade association, competition honors excellence in electronic prod. & postprod. Cats & craft areas incl.: entertainment series; entertainment specials; music video; nat'l commercials; local commercials; promotions; children's programming; sports; docs; short subjects; show reels; corporate communication; opens; closes; titles; transitions; logos; IDs; developmental computer animation. Awards: best achievement honors to producers, directors, editors, etc. in each cat. Awards ceremony to be held in Washington, DC in July. Entries produced or postproduced between Jan. & Dec. of preceding yr. Entries originating on film must be postproduced electronically. Entry fees: $120-160. Format: 3/4". Deadline: Jan. 15 (call 1st; entry date may be extended). Contact: Cece Lazarescu, Int'l Monitor Awards, 350 5th Ave., Ste. 2400, New York, NY 10118; (212) 629-3266; fax: (212) 629-3265.

NEWARK BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, July, NJ. Celebrating 20th anniversary, 6-wk. summer fest of films by black filmmakers showcases int'l black culture. Filmmakers, scholars, historians & other guests discuss films w/ audiences, who are admitted free to all screenings. All genres accepted. Program also features special films for children. Cosponsored by Newark Museum, Newark Public Library, Newark Symphony Hall, Rutgers-Newark & NJ Inst. of Technology. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Jane

Rappaport, Newark Black Film Festival, Newark Museum, 49 Washington St., Box 540, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 596-6550; fax: (201) 642-0459.

NORTH AMERICAN OUTDOOR FILM & VIDEO AWARDS, March, PA. Competition for subject matter covering any aspect of outdoor recreation, wildlife, ecology, soil/water conservation, forestry, etc., sponsored by Outdoor Writers Association of America. Cats: conservation/natural history; recreation/promotion. Winners in conservation /natural history cat. shown at N. American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference in March. Entry fee: $125. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 21. Contact: Bob Dennie, committee chair, c/o Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries, 2000 Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70898 or contact OWAA HQ, 2017 Cato Ave., Ste. 101, State College, PA 16801-2768; (814) 234-1011.

QUEER ARTICULATIONS: 4th PRINCETON LESBIAN, GAY & BISEXUAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, NJ. Looking for narrative, experimental, PSAs, music videos, animation, doc. Copies should be 1/2" VHS. Include description, clips & still. SASE required for return of copies. No fee. Small honorarium for accepted films. Call or write for appl. & more info. Contact: Karen Krahulik, fest director, Princeton LGB Film Festival, 306 Aaron Burr Hall, Princeton, NJ 08544; (609) 258-4522.

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY VISUAL ARTISTS FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, April, CA. Sponsored by Associated Students Program Board at San Jose State, fest accepts entries in all genres. Formats: 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 31. Contact: James Moore, SJSU/ASPB Film Festival, Student Union Rm. 350, San Jose, CA 95192-0132; (408) 924-6264.

SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 20-June 11, WA. To celebrate 20th anniversary, fest, one of largest noncompetitive events in Northwest, is planning a number of special festivities. Opening- & closing-night ceremonies will be held at Fifth Avenue Theatre; Best of Fest program will be held on June 12. Features (over 60 min.) & shorts (under 20 min.) accepted. Each yr. about 140 films from over 45 countries screened. Program incl. US & world premieres & special events. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Darry Macdonald, Seattle Int'l Film Festival, Egyptian Theater, 801 E. Pine St., Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 324-9996; fax: 9998.

SLICE OF LIFE FILM AND VIDEO SHOWCASE, July 15-16, PA. 12th annual fest features competitively chosen observational doc films & videos "which depict the special moments of everyday life—those moments of truth & beauty that would otherwise go unrecognized." Narrative works & works longer than 30 min. not accepted. Winning producers will be brought to fest, receive cash prize & participate in "Meet the Artists" public reception & professionals' conference. Fest is part of annual Central PA Festival of the Arts, which

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brings 250,000 to area. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", preview on 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Sedgwick Heskett, director, Slice of Life Film & Video Showcase, Documentary Resource Center, 106 Boalsburg Pike, PO Box 909, Lemont, PA 16851; (814) 234-1945; fax: 0939.

USA FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 21-28, TX. Fest celebrates excellence in film & video arts w/ major film showcase (now in 24th yr.) as well as national short film & video competition (now in 16th yr.). Fest has annually presented world, national, or regional premieres of hundreds of feature films & short works to audiences of 16,000. Awards for shorts competition announced during fest; competition is open to submissions by all film- & videomakers in US. Entries should be under 60 min. & compete for cash prizes up to $1,000 in cats incl. dramatic, nonfiction, animation, experimental, music video/film, advertising & promotion. Family Award honors excellence in work intended for general audiences, Student Award goes to exceptional work by registered student & Texas Award goes to current TX residents. Deadlines: Mar. 1 (fest); Feb. 28 (shorts competition). Entry fee: $40. Contact: USA Film Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX 75204; (214) 821-6300; fax: 6364.

VIDEO SHORTS COMPETITION, March, WA. Nat'l competition of video artworks, in 13th annual round. General cat & special cat for video by children 12 & under. Entries must be under 6 min. 10 entries chosen winners in general cat, w/ top 3 receiving $100 & rest $50. Two entries selected in special cat, w/ same awards. Winning works mastered onto 1" tape. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Video Shorts, Box 20369, Seattle, WA 98102; (206) 325-8449.

Foreign

BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL, June 5-11, Canada. Fest incl. int'l competition, which awards Rockies, conference for TV professionals & informal coproduction marketplace. Cats: TV features, limited series, continuing series, short dramas, TV comedies, social & political docs, popular science programs, arts docs, performance specials, children's programs. Entries for competition must be made-for-TV (films in theatrical release ineligible). Entries originally in English or French must have TV premiere after March of preceding yr. Producers of programs judged best in each cat receive Rockies sculptures. Grand Prize awarded to film or program judged Best of Fest. Jury may also make 2 special awards for outstanding achievements. Special on-demand screening facilities for all programs, in or out of competition. Contact: Jerry Ezekiel, Banff Television Festival, 204 Caribou St. #306, Box 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada TOL OCO; (403) 762-3060; fax: 5357.

CANNES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 12-23, France. 47th yr of largest & most well-known int'l fest, attended by over 35,000 guests, incl. stars, directors, distributors, buyers & journalists. Intensive round-the-clock screenings, parties, ceremonies, press conferences & one of world's major film markets. Screening or award at Cannes provides fame & prestige. Selection committee, appointed by Administration Board, chooses entries for Official Competition (about 20 films) & for Un Certain Regard section. Films must be made w/in prior 12 months, released only in country of origin & not entered in other film fests. Official component consists of 3 sections: In Competition, features & shorts competition for major fest awards (Palme d'Or, Special Jury Prize, Best Director /Actress/Actor/Jury Prize); Special Out-of-Competition, features ineligible for competition (e.g., films by previous winners of Palme d'Or); Un Certain Regard (noncompetitive), for films of int'l quality which do not qualify for Competition, films by new directors, etc. Parallel sections incl. Quinzaine des Realisateurs (Directors Fortnight), main sidebar for new talent, sponsored by Assoc. of French Film Directors; La Semaine de la Critique (Int'l Critics Week), selection of 1st or 2nd features & docs chosen by members of French Film Critics Union (selections must be completed w/in 12 mos. prior to fest) & Perspectives on French Cinema. Market, administered separately, screens films in main venue & local theater. Top prizes incl. Official Competition's Palme d'Or (feature & short) & Camera d'Or (best 1st film in any section). For info & press accreditation from US (deadline: Mar. 31), contact: Catherine Verret, French Film Office, 745 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10151; (212) 832-8860, fax: (212) 755-0629. Official Sections: Festival International du Film (deadline Mar. 1), 71, rue du Faubourg St. Honore, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 33 1 42 66 92 20; fax: 33 1 42 66 68 85, telex: FESTIFI 285 765 F. Quinzaine des Realisateurs , Societe des Realisateurs de Films, 215 Faubourg St. Honore, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 33 1 45 61 01 66, fax: 1 40 74 07 96. Semaine International de la Critique (deadline Mar. 30), 73, Ave. de Lourmel, 75015 Paris, France; tel: 33 1 45 75 68 27. Cannes Film Market, attn: Marcel Lathiere, Michel P. Bonnet, 71 rue du Faubourg St. Honore, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 1 42 66 92 20; fax: 1 42 66 68 85; telex: FESTIFI 285 765 F.

DRESDEN FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 13-17, Germany. The 6th annual edition of this fest will be presented w/total of 8 competitive, animated & independent programs, along w/5 additional programs, to be held in 3 theatres and 2 workshop cinemas. Jury will pick 3 award winners in competition program, to be based upon film's "independent nature". Awards: 1st prize: 4,000DM; 2nd prize: 2,000DM; 3rd prize: 1,000DM. Audience also selects favorite film for public prize. Competition entries must be a maximum of 30 mins, completed since 1992. Animated film competition awards 3 prizes for "most technically & artistically demanding film contributions in cats of children's films; films up to 5 mins., films 5-15 mins. Animation awards: 1st prize: 10,000DM, 2nd prize: 5,000DM; 3rd prize: 3,000, & 2 diplomas each to receive 1,500DM. Entries in this competition must be a maximum of 15 mins, completed since 1992. Fest will also incl a retrospective of American independent short films from the 70s, 80s & 90s, a program of Russian animated films, & a film ball. Deadline: Feb. 18. Contact: Filmfest Dresden, c/o Filminitiative Dresden, Rähnitzgasse 22, D-01907 Dresden, Germany; tel: 49 351 570537; fax: 49 351 51897.

GOLDEN ROSE OF MONTREUX, Apr. 21-26, Switzerland. Organized by Swiss Broadcasting Corporation & City of Montreux, 34th annual competition for light-entertainment television programs. Broadcasters & ind. producers may compete against each other in the cats of humor, music & general light entertainment, w/ each cat having its own int'l jury. Organizers have also announced series of sessions dealing w/ int'l aspects of latest developments in interactive television. Formats: 3/4". Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: John Nathan, N. American representative, Rose d'Or Montreux, 488 Madison Ave., Ste. 1710, New York, NY 10022; (212) 223-0044.

HIROSHIMA INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL, Aug. 25-29, Japan. 5th annual fest for animated works, administered under patronage of ASIFA, w/ theme "Love & Peace." Entries should be "frame by frame," incl. computer- graphics animation, under 30 min. & completed after Apr. 1, 1992. Cats: Promotional works, debut works, works for children, works for educational purposes, under 5 min., 5-15 min.; 15-30 min. Awards: Grand Prize ¥1,000,000; Hiroshima Prize ¥1,000,000; Debut Prize ¥500,000; 1st & 2nd place prize for best entries in each cat. Hiroshima City will be hosting 12th Asian Games during fest, so it hopes to place emphasis on Asian animation for special program. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline (entry forms): Mar. 21; (films/tapes: Apr. 21). Contact: Sayoko Kinoshita, fest director, Hiroshima Festival Office, 4-17, Kako-machi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima 730, Japan; tel: 81 82 245-0245; fax: 81 82 245-0246.

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June, Australia. Now in 43rd yr., FIAPF & Int'l Short Film Conference-recognized fest is one of Australia's 2 largest & its oldest. Director programs eclectic mix of ind. work. Int'l short film competition (in 32nd yr.) important part of fest. Kino Awards for Short Film (sponsored by Kino Cinemas) incl. Grand Prix ($5,000) & awards of $1,500 each to best Australian film, experimental, animated, doc, fiction & student. Other awards are ANZAAS-CIRO for outstanding film/video dealing w/ science-related subject ($1,500) & AFI Distribution Prize for film/video showing particular distribution potential. Fest seeks entries for young people's film fest & science film fest & program focusing on architecture & design. Fest is useful window to Australian theatrical & nontheatrical outlets, educational distributors & Australian networks. Feature-length narrative & doc films over 60 min. considered; work must have been completed on 35mm & 16mm (video work considered at discretion of fest director) since Jan. 1993 & not screened in Australia. Short-film competition

open to films up to 60 min., on 35mm & 16mm (S-8 & video accepted out of competition), completed since Jan. 1993 & not screened in Australia. Entry fee: $15 (int'l money order). Deadline: Apr. 1 (features); Mar. 18 (shorts). Contact: Tait Brady, fest director, Melbourne Int'l Film Festival, 207 Johnston St., PO Box 296, Fitzroy 3065, Victoria, Australia; tel: 61 3 417-2011; fax: 61 3 417 3804.

SHORT CIRCUIT FILM FESTIVAL, October, France. Organized by Elendil Productions, this event promotes young American cinema in Europe along w/ short films by now-famous American directors. Accepted are short films by emerging & established directors from 30 secs. to 30 mins., made no earlier than 1992; French premieres only. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on VHS only. Deadline: Mar. 31. Contact: Elendil Productions, 853 Broadway, Ste. 1118, New York, NY 10003; (212) 473-8980.

SILENCES ELLES TOURNENT, Apr. 12-17, Canada. Newly reconstituted as a biennial fest after 3 yrs, this fest's objectives are the presentation & promotion of films & videos directed by one or several women (or by a woman-man team) "so that their work may be discovered or rediscovered by the public." Awards: jury prizes (doc feature & short, video, fiction feature film, fiction short film, first work); public prizes in all cats. Film & video noncompetitive cats as well as special events (tribute to Quebec woman producer, retro & workshops on production process) round out fest. Entries must be completed after Jan. 1, 1992. Entry fee: $35CAN (features), $25CAN (shorts/videos). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Betacam. Deadline: Jan. 10. Contact: Eve Langevin, programming assistant, Festival Silence Elles Tournent, 555, Blvd. Rene-Levesque Ouest, bur. 1414, Montreal, Quebec, H2Z 1B1, Canada; (514) 395-6012; fax: (514) 395-6045.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations, and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts; the National Endowment for the Arts; the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; the Rockefeller Foundation; and the Consolidated Edison Company of New York.

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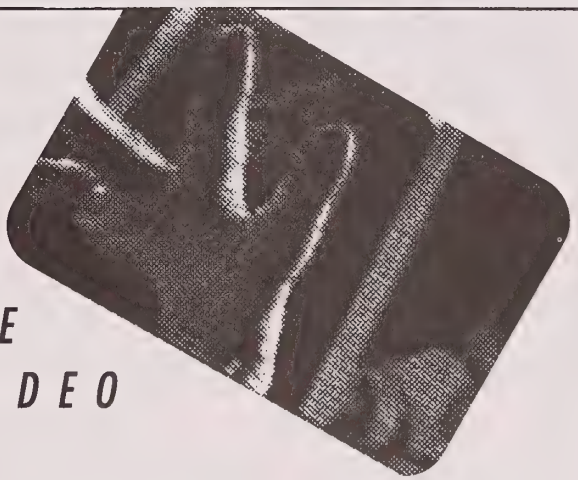


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DP/STEADICAM ARTIST w/ 16SR, 35BL, superspeed lenses, 3-chip camera & BVU 150 deck sound equip., lighting, van. Passport. Certified Scuba diver, French, a little Spanish. Features, commercials, music videos. Call Mick (212) 929-7728.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" column in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film/video community on development thru distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 545-9085.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY. Legal advice, contract negotiating & drafting for film producers, directors & screenwriters. Know your legal rights & protect your artistic property. Kenneth P. Olsen (212) 941-6822.

EXPERIENCED DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri 16 SR package & Mole Richardson lighting package. Seeks interesting film projects in feature or short-subject form. Very reasonable rates for new directors & screenwriters. (212) 737-6815; fax: 423-1125.

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CAST, crew & composer needed for no-budget film. Send work sample on VHS to: "RJ," 3000 NW Williams Way, Redmond, OR 97756; (503) 923-9625.

COPRODUCER/CODIRECTOR sought to develop low-budget doc films on art & cultural subjects. (No salary yet.) Prefer bilingual French or Russian speaker. Contact Katherine at (212) 724-2175.

FEATURE-LENGTH SCREENPLAYS wanted by award-winning ind. producer/director. Send treatment &/or screenplay to John E. Taylor, Box 750513, New Orleans, LA 70115. Send WGA-registered works only.

FLAN DE COCO FILMS, young, energetic ind. prod. company, is looking for undiscovered talent to collaborate w/ on development of feature films. We accept submissions in any form (screenplays, plays, short stories). Flan de Coco Films, Box 93032, Los Angeles, CA 90093.

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of The Independent, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following individuals and businesses:

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Conferences • Seminars

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS & MOMA present premiere circulating exhibition on first 25 years of video art. 48 works from pioneering artists such as Laurie Anderson, Nam June Paik & William Wegman organized into 4 feature-length programs covering: the nature of male/female roles; autobiographical impulse; abstracting possibilites of electronic image processing; fusion of video & performance art. Tour begins this spring in venue near you. For more info, call Dept. of Public Information, American Federation of Arts (212) 988-7700, ext. 29.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE'S ongoing series "Moving Images Enter the Digital Age" resumes this spring on March 5 at 2 pm with "The Silicon Backlot: Inside the Digital Media Production Environments." Guests will include Bob Greenberg, CEO of R/GA Digital Studios & Chris Wedge of computer graphics animation company Blue Sky Productions. Plus, demo of "performance animation," which converts movement data from humans into movement that animates computer characters. AMMI, 36-01 35th Ave, Astoria, NY 11106; for tickets: (718) 784-4520; for info on this and future panels: (718) 784-0077.

SHOWBIZ EXPO WEST, set for June 11-13 at L.A. Convention Center, will host 225 exhibitors (including NBC Enterprises, Universal City Studio & Arriflex). Over 45 industry-driven panels will cover film, corporate video, technology & theater. If you wish to attend or exhibit, call Live Time, Inc. (213) 668-1811.

WOMEN IN LIMBO presents series of issue-oriented autobiographical programs wherein women artists use slides & other media to describe their lives. Audience invited to participate in discussions following the presentations. Programs are Sundays, 6pm-8pm in the Knot Room, Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St. Admission is $3. For more info, call: Melissa Burch (212) 219-8551.

Films • Tapes Wanted

ALIVE TV now accepting submissions of new work for broadcast. Please watch program on PBS & submit work that seems appropriate. Contact: Neil Seiling, producer, for more info at (612) 229-1358 or fax: 1283.

BANANA CLUB, ind. prod. company specializing in networking w/ Japanese investors, producers, promoters, distributors, recording labels, TV networks & other media industries, seeks new materials in cinema, video, music & performing arts. Deadline: Ongoing. Send treatment, description, samples, press kit, standard release form & $20 filing fee to: Banana Club, 41 Union Sq. West, Ste. 714, NY, NY 10003.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION, seeks films/videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of Screen Scene, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info., contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, a new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE, 1/2-hour, monthly news & public affairs program shown on public-access stations across country, is looking for footage or produced pieces (1-30 min.) on Central America, Cuba & Haiti (especially Haiti, Salvadoran elections, return of Guatamalan refugees from Mexico). Also looking for someone in D.C. to tape interviews for show. Can't pay, but can cover costs of tape & mailing. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

COLLECTING COLLECTORS, video screening series that celebrates people w/ passion for collecting, seeks everything from unedited tapes to feature films. Send VHS tape w/ SASE & description to: Danny Leonard, media arts coordinator, Center for Creative Work, 425 Bush St., Ste. 425, San Francisco, CA 94108; (510) 527-4814.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

THE EDGE, Denver-based media collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres considered. Formats: 16mm. S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

THE E-TEAM, children's TV show w/ environmental theme, seeks film/video footage & completed works that maintain environmental, nature or science theme. Fees paid for footage used on air. Contact: David Calderwood, producer, Euro-Pacific Productions, Inc. (908) 530-4451.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FILMS/VIDEOS WANTED. Shorts under 10 min. for DYKE TV, weekly NYC cable-TV show. For info, call: (212) 343-935 or fax: 9337.

FULL HOUSE, night of movies. Monthly fest of short films produced for exhibition in ever-expanding number of venues throughout the U.S. Films must be 16mm w/ optical sound. Need not be recent prods. but should be under 30 min. (w/ some exceptions). Preview on 16mm preferred. Send $10 w/ entry & SASE to: Jack of Hearts Productions, Box 3004, Albany, NY 12203; (518) 489-2037.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., Ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, Ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

NATIONAL POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that create strong self image among teens. All genres—art, music on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, Ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at the Center for the Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge the boundaries of creative video/TV.

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NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across the US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

OPEN WIDE, weekly, half-hour TV series produced by CBC Manitoba that profiles best of alternative, underground & ind. cinema from Canada, US & world, seeks submissions. Looking for experimental, video art, comedy, drama, animation, docs & music videos between 30 sec. & 20 min. Submissions on 16mm, VHS, Hi8, 3/4", 1/2" or video. Film/video associations & distribs. should send catalogs w/ submissions. License fee paid if selected for broadcast. Submissions may be in any language from any time. Will acknowledge submission w/in 10 days. Send to: Open Wide, CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2G1, Attn: Shipping Dept.; (204) 788-3111, Gavin Rich, producer.

ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in 8mm, S-8 & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PHILADELPHIA STORIES screenwriting competition accepting submissions nationally for original feature-length screenplays set primarily in greater Philadelphia metro area. All genres accepted; scripts judged on quality & extent they tell a genuine Philadelphia story. Awards: $3,000, fest. passes, story notes, meeting w/ industry professionals. Postmark deadline: Jan. 21. Entry fee: $20. Winner announced May 1994 during 3rd Annual Philadelphia Fest. of World Cinema. Submissions not accepted w/o completed application form. For guidelines, send SASE to: PFWC/Screenwriting Competition, International House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit an irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

SUPER CAMERA, production of Office KEI, an int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-

before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from both the natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., Ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017, (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

VIDEO SHORTS, a nat'l video art competition, seeks works 6 min or less in 3/4", 3/4" SP, VHS, S-VHS, 8mm & Hi8 formats, NTSC standard only. In addition to general category, there is special "Video by Children" category, for which children 12 & under are eligible. Cash prizes for top entries. Entry fee: $20 per piece, $10 for each additional entry on the same cassette. Submissions must be postmarked no later than Feb. 1. For more info & entry forms, write: Video Shorts, Box 20369, Seattle, WA 98102; (206) 325-8449.

Opportunities • Gigs

INDEPENDENT producers interested in working for NYC agencies in freelance media production are invited to participate in new database directory to be distributed through Crosswalks Television & other sources. Will link inds. w/ government agencies creating media. $10 registration fee gets listing w/ 1 update per yr. For more info & appl., write: SCS Productions, 244 W. 54 St. #800, New York, NY 10019.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, Dept. of Radio-TV-Film, seeks qualified candidates for 2 tenure-track assistant professor positions for fall 1994. First is in int'l communication & mass communication theory & requires Ph.D. in communication or related field. Send letter, resumé, references & samples of published works to: Sharon Strover, Dept. of Radio-TV-Film, CMA 6.118, UT-Austin, Austin, TX 78712-1091. Also, position in film/video prod. requiring Ph.D., MFA &/or strong record of prod. Materials should be sent to: Faculty Search Committee—Prod., Dept. of Radio-TV-Film. EOE. Review of appls. will continue until positions are filled.

Resources • Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE administers for the National Endowment for the Arts program of grants for ind. media artists whose work shows exceptional promise & who have demonstrated a commitment to the art of moving image. Highly competitive; limited grants. Previous recipients may not reapply. Grants range from $10,000 to $20,000. Appls. judged on basis of creativity of proposed project & artistic merit & technical quality of sample work. For info & deadline, contact: American Film Institute, Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7600.

CENTER FOR MEDIA, CULTURE & HISTORY at NYU announces Rockefeller humanities fellowships for scholars, media-makers & activists who wish to address issues of representation, social change & the construction of identity embedded in develop-

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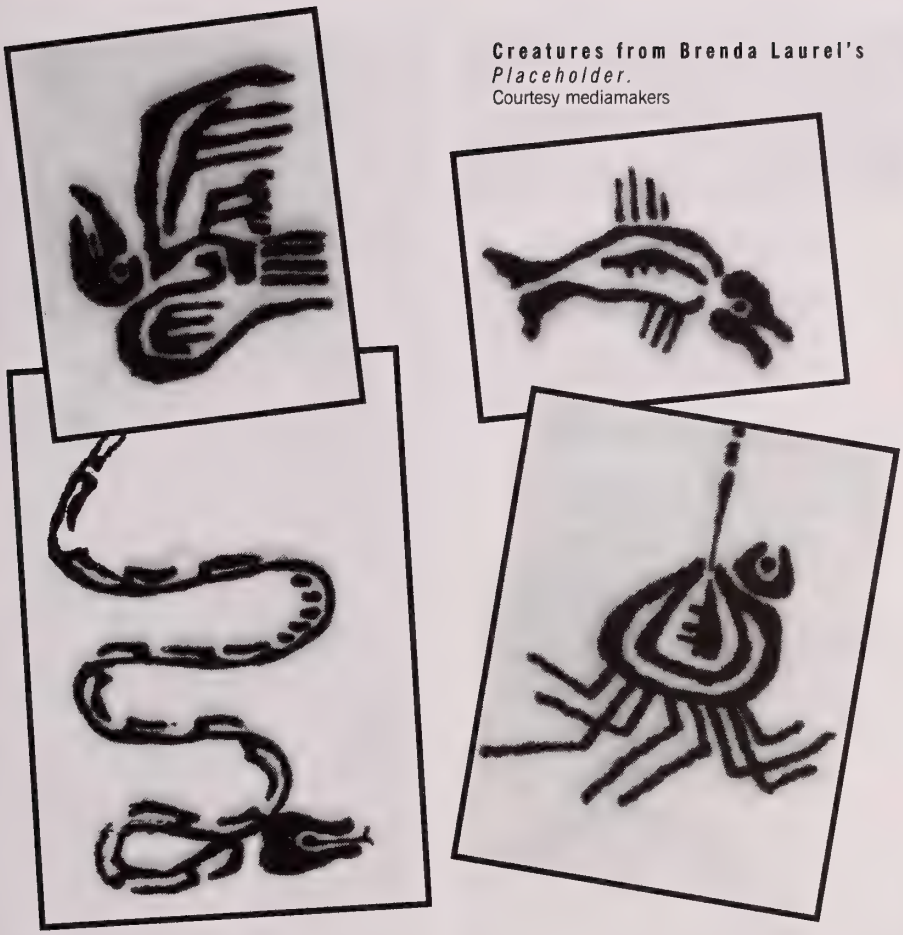
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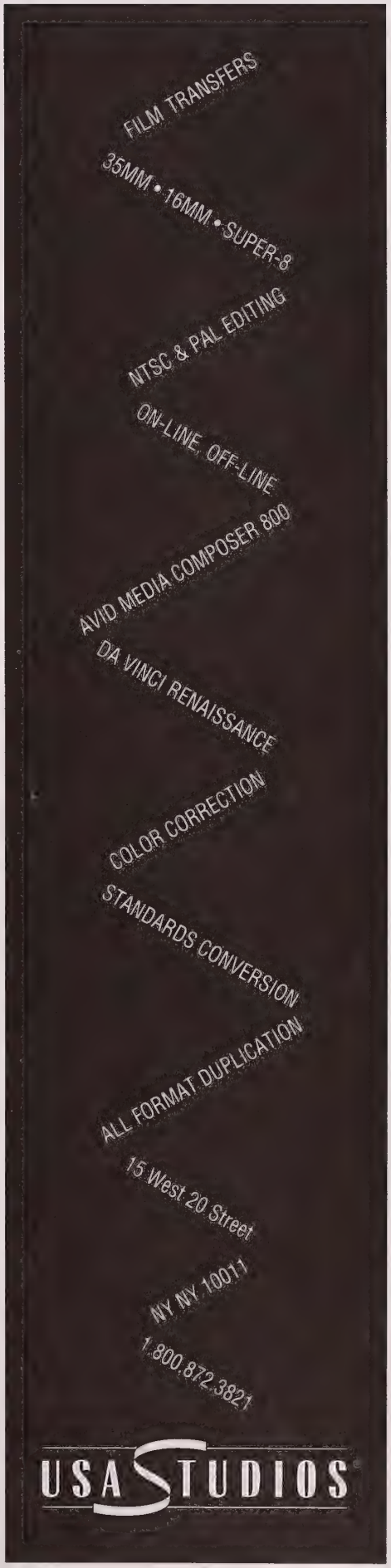
Creatures from Brenda Laurel's *Placeholder*.
Courtesy mediamakers

continued from page 19

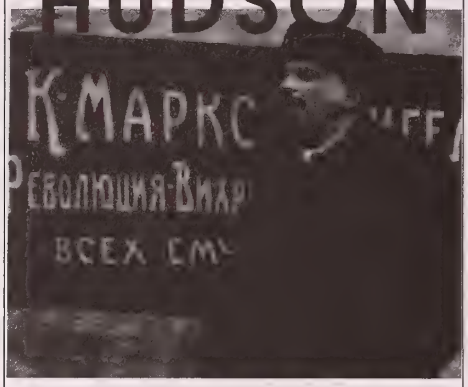
would stimulate user creativity with minimal constraints. Strickland and Laurel began by shooting footage of a sulfur hot spring in a natural cave, a waterfall, and a fantastic rock formation near Banff National Park. Then they digitized their footage, spatialized their sound, and added some simple character animation. As participants enter the exhibition space, they see two ten-foot circles surrounded by river rocks. The users put on a head-mounted display. First, the users are in darkness. Then a cave comes up, and a character, whom Laurel calls "The Goddess," begins to offer bits of advice through the HMD speakers. The users can't see her, and her voice, unlike all the other sounds in the space, is not spatialized. As users enter the cave, creatures—a spider, crow, fish, and snake—begin to talk from petroglyphs on the cave walls and entice them closer. When a user gets close enough, he or she "becomes" the animal. The user assumes the physical features of the animal and his or her voice is distorted. Laurel calls these "smart costumes."

Visitors to the virtual cave, like campers in a park, also leave signs of their presence. Users can leave "voicemarks," bits of spoken narrative, in a "voiceholder," which can be heard and rearranged by later visitors. In this way, the virtual landscape accumulates definition. The voiceholder appears to be a rock with a primitive face carved on it. When its eyes are closed, the voiceholder is empty. When someone has a message, its eyes are open. People were told how to use the voiceholder before entering the space, but unfortunately, a technical problem made it difficult to use. Technical snarls are problems that interactive producers confront constantly. "When something doesn't work quickly, people lose interest," says Laurel. For those people who figured out how to make it work, "The activity became about solving that problem."

The smart costumes and voiceholder are intended to provide interesting dramatic potential for users. Laurel has several names for these devices: "enhanced props," "smart clay," or "prostheses for the imagination." They are designed to enhance people's desire to create their own world within the environment. After watching 120 people walk through *Placeholder* at Banff, Laurel is not worried anymore about motivating people to interact. "The gee-whiz factor is still very strong," she says, "and if you leave interesting things around, embedded things—like placing treasure at the bottom of a pool—to make people create goals, they



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get even more deeply involved.

"This malleable world seems odd to adults," Laurel continues. "Adults make a clear distinction between authoring and consuming. To adults, if you have to make the world and then play in it, it feels like changing hats. Little kids don't have that problem." By way of example, Laurel points out that children make assertions, and those assertions instantly become part of the play environment. A child will say, "I am a princess and I am riding a horse." And, like God in Genesis, so it is. By contrast, Laurel says, "Adults need a certain anonymity or ability to mask. They need props like the smart costumes so that they don't look silly. When those conditions exist, adults like to play."

Much current criticism of VR focuses on its lousy image resolution, but Laurel argues that image quality isn't critical. A certain level of visual ambiguity (like one finds in the rocks and waterfalls at Banff) "evokes more imaginative play." Laurel adds: "It's like the faces you see in clouds. They make projection screens for the imagination. The visual resolution is not as important as a certain evocative ambiguity from natural shapes." An additional discovery that diminished the preeminent importance of the visual image was find-



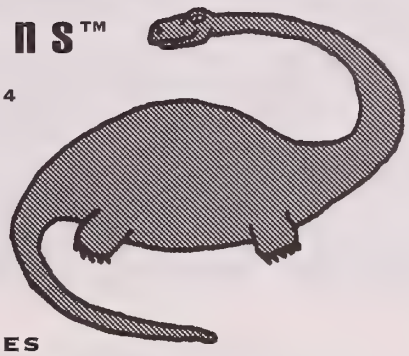
ing that high quality audio made people say the images looked better.

Worth noting is the fact that Toni Dove, Perry Hoberman, and Brenda Laurel's pieces were all produced through a one-of-a-kind, artist-centered, high-tech program in Canada, where such erudite ventures occasionally flourish as a result of federal largesse and corporate enlightenment. Because of the expensive equipment and unusually knowledgeable staff necessary to build and operate it, the works are unlikely to be seen anywhere else in the world. The problem of appropriate venues is not isolated to projects developed at Banff. In general, finding exhibition sites for noncommercial interactive multimedia is close to impossible.

Grahame Weinbren has been trying to present *Sonata* at film festivals. Museum exhibition is problematic, he explains, because "in a museum, people want to 'get it' in two minutes." At festivals, people expect to spend as much time as they would with any other film. Weinbren, like other producers, awaits interactive television technology with cautious optimism. Given the conditioning influence of TV, will people want to sit in front of their sets without breaking for a phone call or a dash to the fridge?

Laurel is also hoping that people eventually will be able to use her piece at

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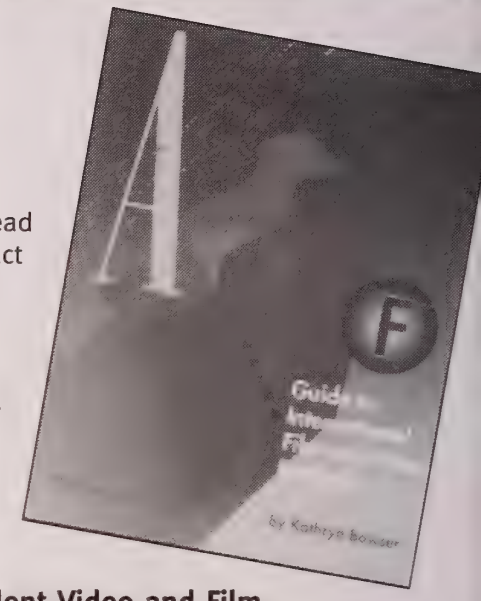
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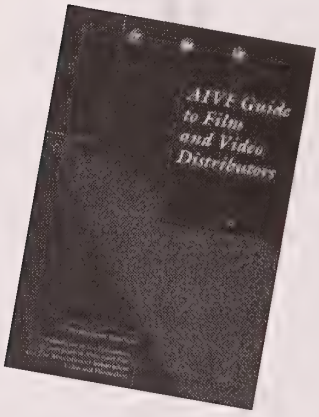
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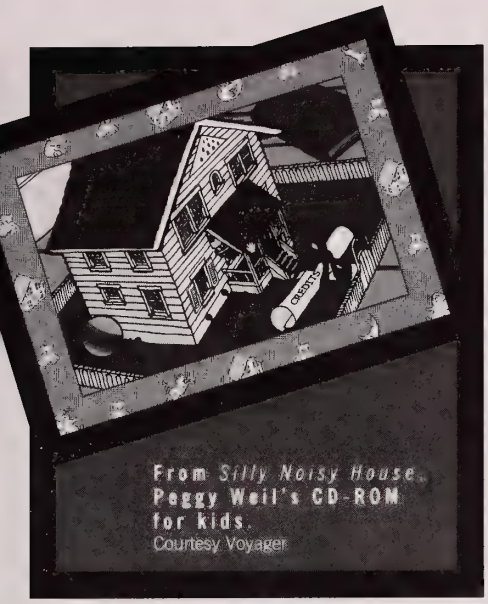
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home. Ten years down the line, she believes, *Placeholder* will find life as a consumer product to be distributed on an electronic network and used at home with a lightweight helmet and glove.

In the short term, Peter Adair, Peggy Weil, John Sanborn, and Greg Roach are all working on commercially backed consumer products. Most of these are under nondisclosure agreements, which prevent them from talking about the projects. Security is tight. The industry assumption is that when the "killer application" for multimedia appears, it will be to interactive what *Birth of a Nation* was to movies.

But the can't-live-without-it application remains to be invented. "I used to feel that interactive multimedia would build on existing syntax," says Roach. "I'm now beginning to believe that there's a whole new syntax needed by this medium that will be fundamentally different than television and film.

"Even the best of us are so shackled by our training," he continues. "It's very hard to throw off all the vestiges of those previous forms. It will take a whole new generation that grows up inside of this medium to really find out what it's all about. I hope some of us can kick the doors open a little bit."

Barbara Bliss Osborn reports on new technologies through the hopelessly old-fashioned and irrefutably linear technology of print.

Most of the pieces discussed in this article were produced with a mix of off-the-shelf and customized software. Interactive designers agree that the design, production, and postproduction of an interactive piece are integrally connected. A number of designers build their projects using the popular software package called MacroMind Director. They can then have the MacroMind prototype programmed in C Code, which runs faster. Adair describes the difference between MacroMind and C Code as the difference between "a prefab house and having someone deliver trees."

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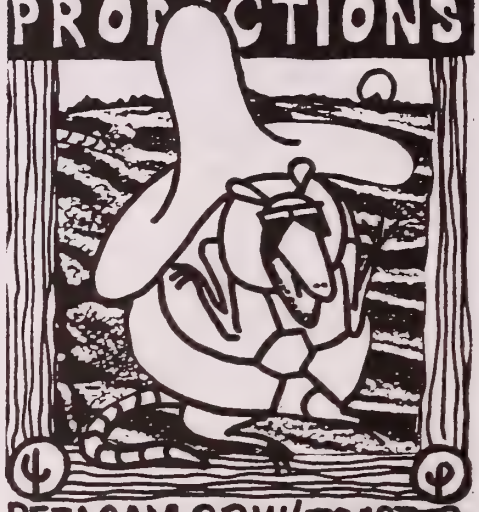
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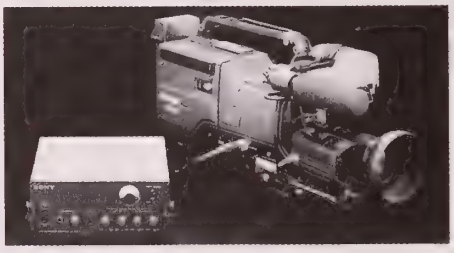


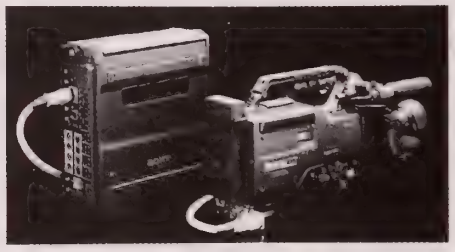
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continued from page 21

But he admits that what's functional isn't always a finished piece. "Sometimes research is just getting the parts out of the box and making it work. That's often a significant accomplishment." he says.

Producing a piece seems a small price to pay for a minimum of 10-weeks access to pricey computer equipment and trained staff, plus room and board. The centerpiece of Banff's hardware is the number-crunching Silicon Graphics ONYX, a $300,000 computer which makes the VR environments possible. "Artists are usually in a state of desperation by the time they get here," says MacLeod. Without Banff, he believes they would never have access to the equipment or support staff necessary for their pieces. Laurel estimates that her VR piece *Placeholder* would have cost over $1 million.

Not everyone pounces impatiently on the hardware, however. Resident Toni Dove didn't think she wanted to work in VR when she first went to Banff to attend the Bioapparatus symposium in 1991. Afterward, she applied to the Art and Virtual Environments program with a theater piece and eventually became convinced that the piece would be interesting as a VR installation. Initially she was nervous about working in virtual reality. "It was extremely hyped," she recalls, "and I didn't want to be the shock troops for the next Nintendo game."

Although she says her piece *Archaeology of a Mother Tongue* is functional, she describes it as a work-in-progress. "We got a skeleton up and running," she says of her piece, which takes a viewer through three 3D-projected environments. But after four months of working with over a half-dozen engineers and programmers, she still didn't have a chance to work out issues of interactivity.

The high-tech hardware and resulting complexity of the pieces can be a blessing and a curse. To some extent, Banff's hardware, particularly ONYX, limits where the works can be shown. Since most arts institutions only have access to low-end computers, building a piece around the ONYX limits its future exhibition. Like many Virtual Environment residents, Brenda Laurel has reluctantly accepted that her piece will probably never be shown outside Banff. Not only is *Placeholder* hardware-specific, the programming code is very fragile and the engineers who worked on it are the only people who know how to run it.

For all its relative lavishness, Banff's resources are limited and the program has been stretched to capacity by the number of technically demanding projects it took on. Doug MacLeod reports that he's learned a lot. "Trying to do eight projects in two years was too much," he admits, so he is going to scale back. Next cycle, MacLeod says, Banff will workshop three to four projects and produce just two.

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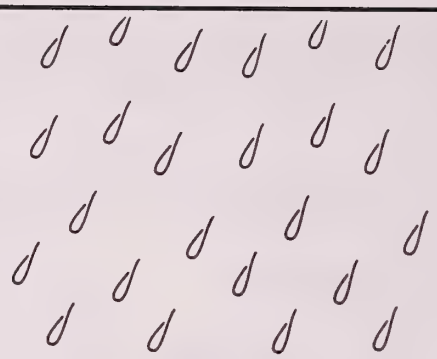
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that lets you know everything that's online," Jones explains. "It's highly wild."

One unusual option last May was David Blair's feature-length experimental video *Wax, Or the Discovery of Television Among the Bees*. With little hope of getting picked up by the increasingly conservative and series-minded public television system and limited opportunities on the video art exhibition circuit, Blair started publicizing Wax through the USENET, the Internet's extensive bulletin board. Through the net, he came in contact with Vince Bilotta, "a kinda crazy guy who used to be the Amiga dealer in the East Village, then got hooked on communications," says Blair. At the time, he recalls, Bilotta's company, Amphibian, was trying to set up a "parallel image internet" with fat connects to the real Internet that would be able to link post-production houses in New York with places like the Cinecite Digital Film Center, Kodak's digital imaging and special effects facility in Burbank. Bilotta arranged for the necessary bandwidth for a full-screen MBONE netcast of *Wax*, and on May 23, 1993, the first feature-length fiction video went out over the Internet.

Since people have to log on, Blair knows exactly how many tuned in: "There were about 10 or 12 [sites] that watched, mostly from Australia, Finland, and the West Coast." He adds, "You have to remember that this could only be seen at research labs, and it was after hours." Indeed, the netcast was more about research and development than audience numbers. The *New York Times* even compared it to Alexander Graham Bell's legendary moment of triumph, when he exclaimed, "Watson, come here!" Despite its spare audience, the netcast attracted considerable attention. In addition to the *New York Times*' coverage, Blair spread the word about Wax and the netcast on USENET, as well as on MBONE's own program list, and the Electronic Frontier Foundation's "Interesting People" bulletin board discussion group. The online promotion "has helped me a lot," says Blair, who reports healthy sales of *Wax* video cassettes.

When discussing video on the Internet, it's production more than distribution that interests Blair. "I wanted to be able to model worlds on a small computer at home," says the videomaker, "and then run them at a distance on a big computer." It's a system already being explored at the high-end. "For *Jurassic Park*, Amblin Entertainment rented Silicon Graphics machines all over the state for block periods of time," then piped these images to a central location. In Blair's view, the possibilities of video over the Internet are just beginning to be realized. "Everything you do with imaging, you do with text first. Looks at MUDs and MOOs—these are

multi-user text tools. When you add video, it becomes multimedia."

One step down the technological ladder from MBONE is a software package developed at Cornell University called CU-SeeMe, which transmits video without audio. You log on to an Internet number and, presto, a small screen pops up with live black-and-white video at about 24 fps. The program is smart enough to drop out frames when the traffic on the Internet gets heavy. The result is a low-resolution video image that lacks fluidity but is still recognizable; such a deletion process in audio would make speech unintelligible, which is one reason why CU-SeeMe does without audio, at least for the moment.

So how does one "hear" with CU-SeeMe? There are two options: placing a telephone conference call or typing on the computer keyboard, which produces a text scroll on the screen. "We used to hold up boards," says George Brett of the Clearinghouse for Networked Information Discovery and Retrieval (CNIDR), recalling the program's beginnings less than a year ago. What's so quaintly limiting in CU-SeeMe, however, also keeps things simple enough to allow many more people to use it than MBONE. To receive video, one merely needs a Mac (even a humble Powerbook or Classic will do), a standard modem and telephone line, and the free CU-SeeMe software, available for research and educational purposes from gated.cornell.edu. Under the video directory, one will find two versions of CU-SeeMe—one that works on regular Macs and another for the new AV Macs—plus an information file.

To send video, one only has to add a camera and a video spigot. Columbia University's deputy vice president of Academic Information Systems, Vace Kundakci, set up his system for just $600. The empty hardware boxes are still lying around Kundakci's office: There's the SuperMac Digital Video Card, which runs just under $400, and Nippon's $200 TeleCamera, a cigarette-box-sized unit that sits on top of Kundakci's computer (or, in Brett's case, on a tiny tripod purchased from the camping outfitters REI).

Kundakci covers the blackboard with lines and arrows as he explains how the routing system for a CU-SeeMe video conference works. At the center is a reflector address—that is, a computer terminal where all the participants in a video conference will send their signals and from which they're reflected back. As chair of the technical subcommittee for NYSERNet's board of directors, Kundakci and his fellow committee members, who are scattered around New York State, have taken to meeting on the Internet using CU-SeeMe. It's easy and much cheaper than airfare.

The real experts in CU-SeeMe, however, aren't found in any university. They're in junior high school and, at ages 10 to 14,

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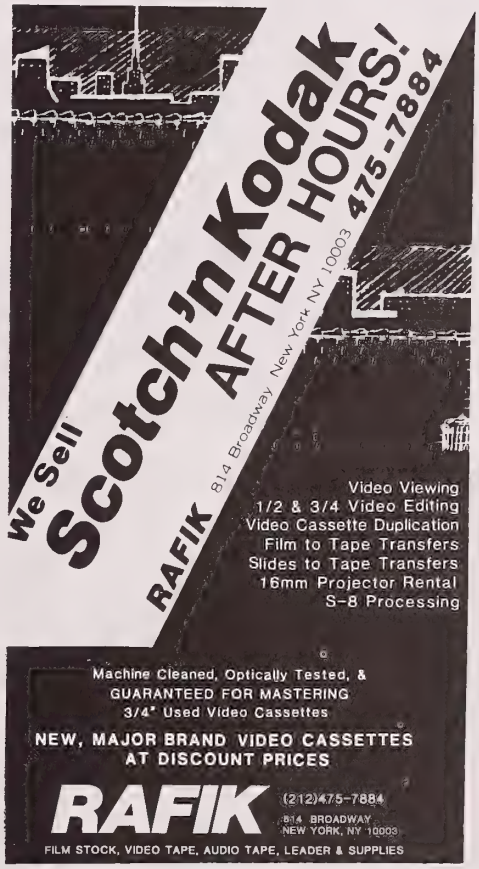


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have logged on more hours with CU-SeeMe than anyone else. These are the students participating in the Global Schoolhouse Project (GSP), a program of the 20-year-old nonprofit Global SchoolNet Foundation, which began in 1992 in schools in Knoxville, TN; Arlington, VA; Oceanville, CA; and London. (Next year 17 schools will participate.) "It is designed to integrate Internet tools into the science curriculum," says Brett, who acts as the program's principal investigator and technical advisor. In a sense, CU-SeeMe was developed for this project. What had been a point-to-point video conferencing tool was taken a step further to accommodate the needs of the Global Schoolhouse Project, which wanted to simultaneously link students at several schools. Now the software allows six video windows to be open at once and permits approximately 20 additional sites to watch.

During its pilot year, the Global Schoolhouse students worked on a joint project: pollution in the groundwater. They went about their tasks—field testing, public surveys, research on environmental laws and regulations—then reconvened each week in front of their CU-SeeMe terminals to share their findings, sometimes venturing into simple multimedia displays by showing pictures and transmitting three- to four-minute videos from their fieldwork.

Periodically students got to interview scientists via the Internet on special CU-SeeMe "Talk Shows." In turn, a panel of scientists quizzed the students about their projects in an online science and environmental fair. But at other times, the adults' questions were more about CU-SeeMe and the Global Schoolhouse, as at last year's National Academy of Science conference, where students instructed the scientists during a live demo over the net.

At Penn State, a CU-SeeMe kiosk is set up outside the education office. "People are constantly going in and out," says Yvonne Andrés, a teacher at Oceanside and Global Schoolhouse curriculum director. "They'll walk by and see the screen, look at it, and realize they're not looking at a video; there are really people at the other end, looking at them and waving to them. My students would type back, 'Hi, who are you?' The people would be so puzzled they wouldn't know what to do, so my students would write, 'Type on the keyboard! Tell us who you are, what your job is, and what you're doing.'" (For more information on tIhe Global Schoolhouse Project, contact andresyv@cerf.net.)

Soon, even the need to type will disappear. CU-SeeMe's developers are hoping to introduce sound within the year. How long will it be before the technological gap between MBONE and CU-SeeMe is bridged? "Realistically, I'd say 18 to 24 months, at the earliest," George Brett replies. While this might seem a long time for those developing the technology, for producers and distributors it means that a new image transmission tool is right around the corner. "Things happen real fast," Brett concedes. "Last January CU-SeeMe was point-to-point. Because of the Global Schoolhouse's saying they wanted multipoint, they did that reflector business—that happened in five or six months. We're hoping that in two to three months from now we'll have the MS-DOS version. Those are pretty good advances in just a short time."



Junior high science students communicate via a CU-SeeMe video conference on the Internet.
Photo: Yvonne Marie Andres

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.

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MEMBERABILIA

Michael Uys and Lexy Lovell have received a grant from the New York Council for the Humanities for their documentary *Riding the Rails: Children of the Great Depression*. Uys and Lowell have chosen their subjects from over 2,500 letters by former tramps who rode freight trains during the 1930s.

Among 16 multicultural television projects that received funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting are several works by AIVF members: *Blackside Classic Children's Tales*, a 10-part series featuring computer-animated folktales, by Henry Hampton and Judy Richardson; *Conjure Women*, a documentary on African-American female artists, by Demetria Royals, Yvonne Smith, and Louise Diamond; *Litany: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde*, an examination of the writer's life and works, by Michelle Parkerson and Ada Gay Griffin; *Life with the Bartletts*, the story of three young boys brought to Connecticut in the 1870s under the auspices of Dr. Yung Wing's Chinese educational mission, by Peter Wang and Ray Blanco; *Tierra: A Dramatic Film of Tomas River's Novel*, about a poor Mexican-American boy and his farmworker family, by Paul Espinosa; and *Malcolm X: Make It Plain* by Henry Hampton.

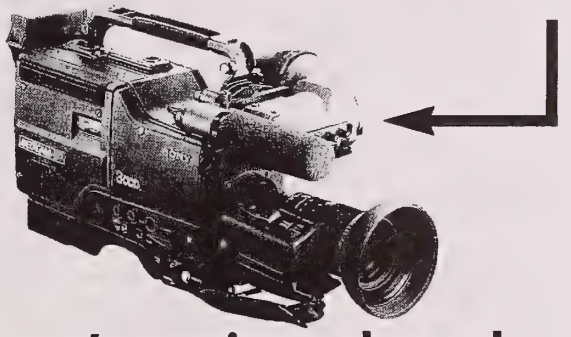
A Day at a Time, a film by Chuck Schultz and William Garcia, received a Crystal Heart award at the 1993 Heartland Film Festival.

Barbara Sykes-Dietze's video *Sketching a Motion* was recently purchased by the education department at New York's Museum of Modern Art. A second video, *Kalyian*, was screened during Intimate Technology, an invitational video- and computer-art exhibition sponsored by Kansas State University.

Member Michelle Handelman has been keeping busy. Her film *Homophobia Is Known to Cause Nightmares* screened at the N.Y. Experimental Gay and Lesbian Festival. She also performed in Lynn Hershman's film *Virtual Love*, which screened at the Mill Valley Film Festival.

Benjamin Shapiro's half-hour documentary *Home Across the Water*, about the history and struggles for survival of the Gullah communities in Georgia and South Carolina, received first prize at the AFI/Sony Visions of U.S. contest, a blue ribbon at the American Film and Video Festival, and a Bronze Apple at the National Educational Film Festival.

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AIVF GOES ON-LINE

AIVF is currently working in cooperation with several alternative media organizations to set up a permanent home for our members to network and exchange information on the America Online network. We hope to provide specifics in the next issue of *The Independent*, so watch this space for details.

For the months of January and February, however, Mark Abbate of Abbate Video has generously allowed us to use his bulletin board to get started; readers wishing to discuss issues raised in this issue—including the new technologies, their implications for the independent field, and how to plan for the future—can join our discussion group by accessing the "aivf" area under the keyword "abbate." By the end of February, when we hopefully will have a permanent address, you'll find a signpost in the Abbate bulletin board directing you to AIVF's new keyword.

If you have been thinking about going on-line but have put it off, now is a good opportunity to take advantage of America Online's introductory offer of 10 free on-line hours to try out the software, while networking with fellow AIVF members. America Online's toll-free subscription number is (800) 827-6364. Once you are on-line, pull down "GO TO" from the menu at the top of the screen, and select "key word"; at the prompt, type abbate (that's 2 "b"s) to access Mark's bulletin board, then select the aivf option.

We are very excited about the possibilities that going on-line presents us as an organization attempting to reach members outside of New York. We will be able to make many services available on-line, as well as giving our members the opportunity to connect with one another, exchange information, and share experiences without geographic limitations. Join us in January and February on America Online as we begin to engage in making the new technology work for us.

AIVF BOARD NOMINATIONS

It's not too soon to begin thinking about nominations for the AIVF board of directors, who will be elected at the annual membership meeting on April 22. Board members are elected to a 2-year term of office; the board gathers four times a year in NYC for 2-day meetings (AIVF pays the travel costs if you live outside the City).

We have an active board; members must be prepared to set aside adequate time to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

- Attendance at all board meetings and participation in conference calls when necessary;
- Preparation for meetings by reading advance materials sent by staff;
- Active participation in one or more committees as determined by the organization's needs and as requested by the board chair or executive director; fulfillment of commitments within agreed-upon deadlines;
- General support for the executive director and staff as needed.

Board nominations must be made and seconded by current AIVF members in good standing. You may nominate yourself. Student members are not eligible for election to the board. Nominations not seconded in advance may be seconded at the membership meeting in April.

To make a nomination, send or fax us the name, address, and telephone numbers of the (1) nominee, (2) nominator, and (3) member seconding the nomination. We cannot accept nominations over the phone. There will be more information about the membership meeting in coming issues of *The Independent*; watch this space for details.

LOOKING TOWARD THE PAST

For the special 20th anniversary issue of *The Independent* to be published in June 1993, AIVF and FIVF are looking to catch up with the organizations' original members. If you are one—or know the whereabouts of anyone familiar with the early days of AIVF and FIVF—please call Michele Shapiro at (212) 473-3400.

CALIFORNIA HEALTH INSURANCE ALERT

Members who are residents of California will have an unusual opportunity to buy medical insurance during a 30-day enrollment period beginning February 1 without providing evidence of insurability.

Recently issued California Insurance Department regulations require CIGNA, through TEIGIT, to offer guaranteed medical insurance to all California AIVF members and their families, regardless of their medical histories. Members may select one of two plans: (1) CIGNA Health Plan (HMO): Applicants will be provided with a guide from which to select a primary care physician for each family member. Members pay $15 for each office visit and $250 for each hospital stay. Generic drugs are $10. The network includes all types of specialists. Expenses incurred outside the network

continued on page 63

FILM & VIDEO INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

IN UPCOMING ISSUES:

March: Regional Spotlight on San Francisco, the West Coast's haven for independents.
April: More on the Information Superhighway: Nine views from the independent media field

UPCOMING EVENTS

TAX SEMINAR

It's almost that time again. But this year when April 15 rolls around, you can be prepared. Since AIVF recognizes that independent mediamakers have special needs in filing annual income taxes, the organization has organized its annual seminar around issues of interest at tax time. CPAs specializing in this area will provide advice to AIVF members. Space is limited; call (212) 473-3400 to reserve your place today.

Where: AIVF Offices
When: January 13, 7:00 pm
Cost: $10 Members/$15 Others

MEET AND GREET SESSIONS

Meet and Greet sessions enable AIVF members to gather in an informal setting to meet funders, producers, programmers, distributors, and others and discuss their work and issues of importance to the field. Both of the following events take place at the AIVF office, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY. They are open to AIVF members only. Each session is limited to 30 attendees. The sessions are free of charge; RSVP essential. Call (212) 473-3400 to reserve your place.

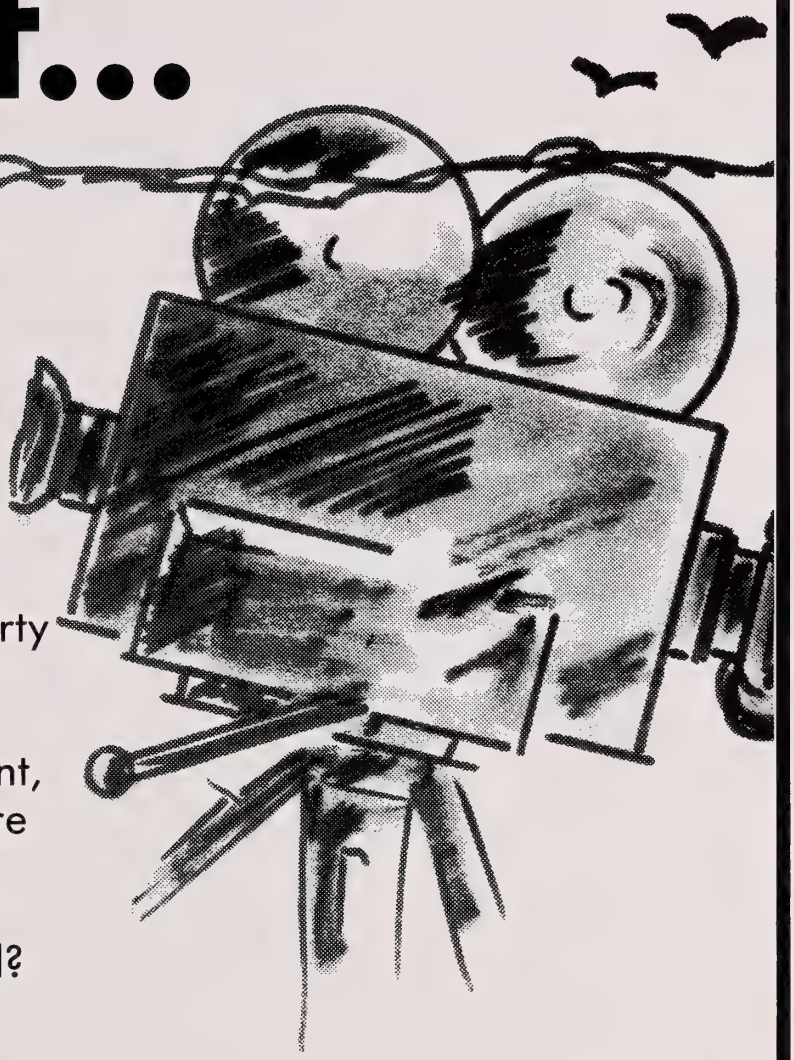
BRUNI BURRES
Program Director, Human Rights Watch Film Festival
The festival premieres in New York in May; selected films and videos are presented in other U.S. sites throughout the year. Features, documentaries, shorts, and animation are all considered for inclusion. This informal get-together will allow members to hear about the festival's general selection procedures and special programs planned for this year.

Date: Wednesday, January 12
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JAMES YEE
Executive Director, ITVS
ITVS is now the single most important source of production funds for alternative and independent work intended for public television broadcast. Yee will discuss changes he is instituting at ITVS this year and new programmatic initiatives and funding priorities. He will also engage members in a general policy discussion.

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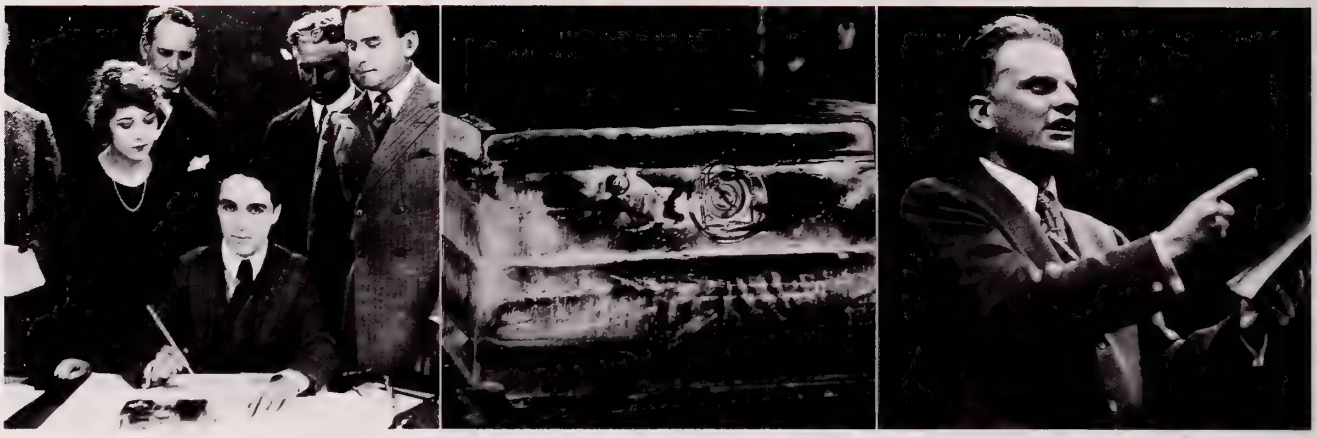
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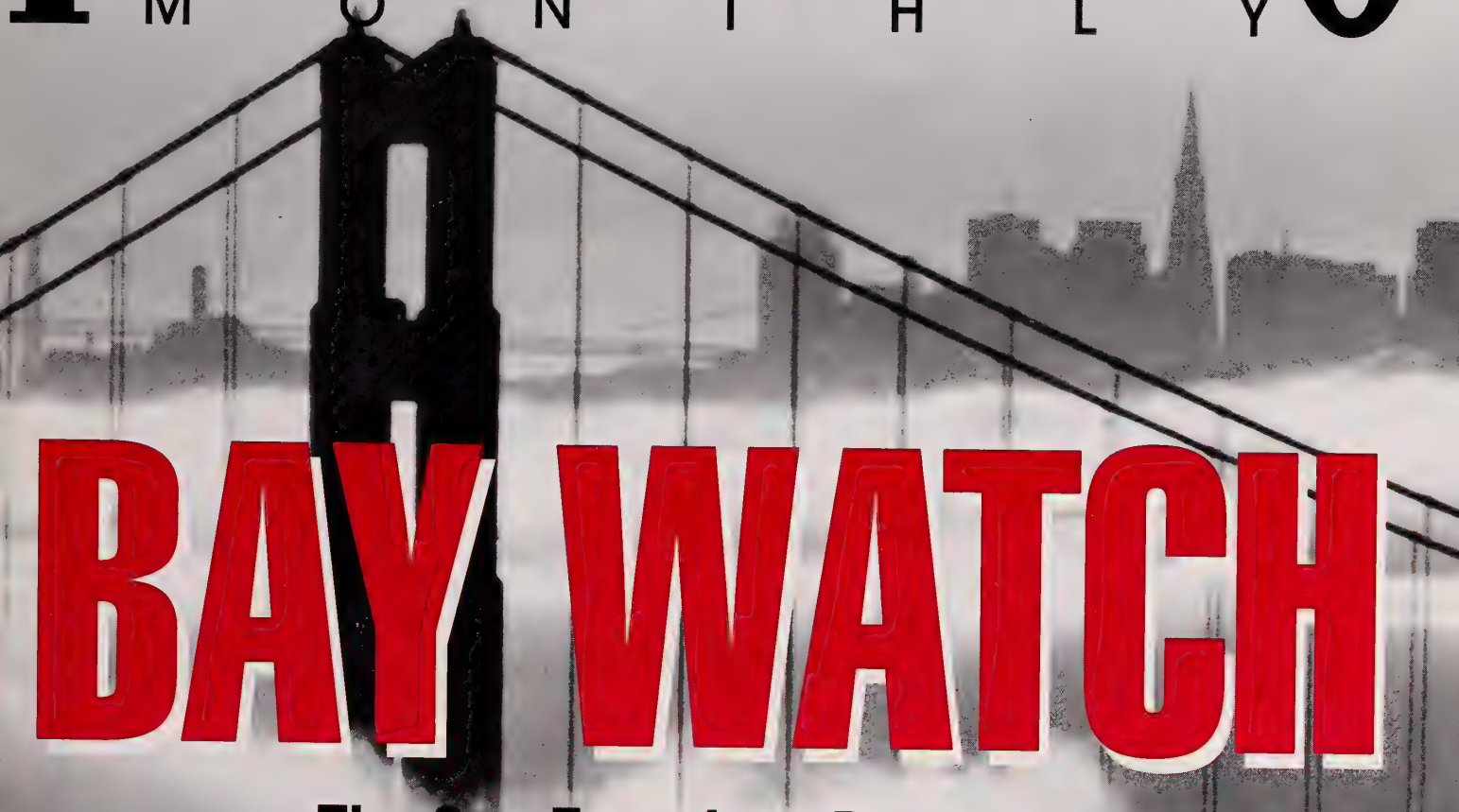
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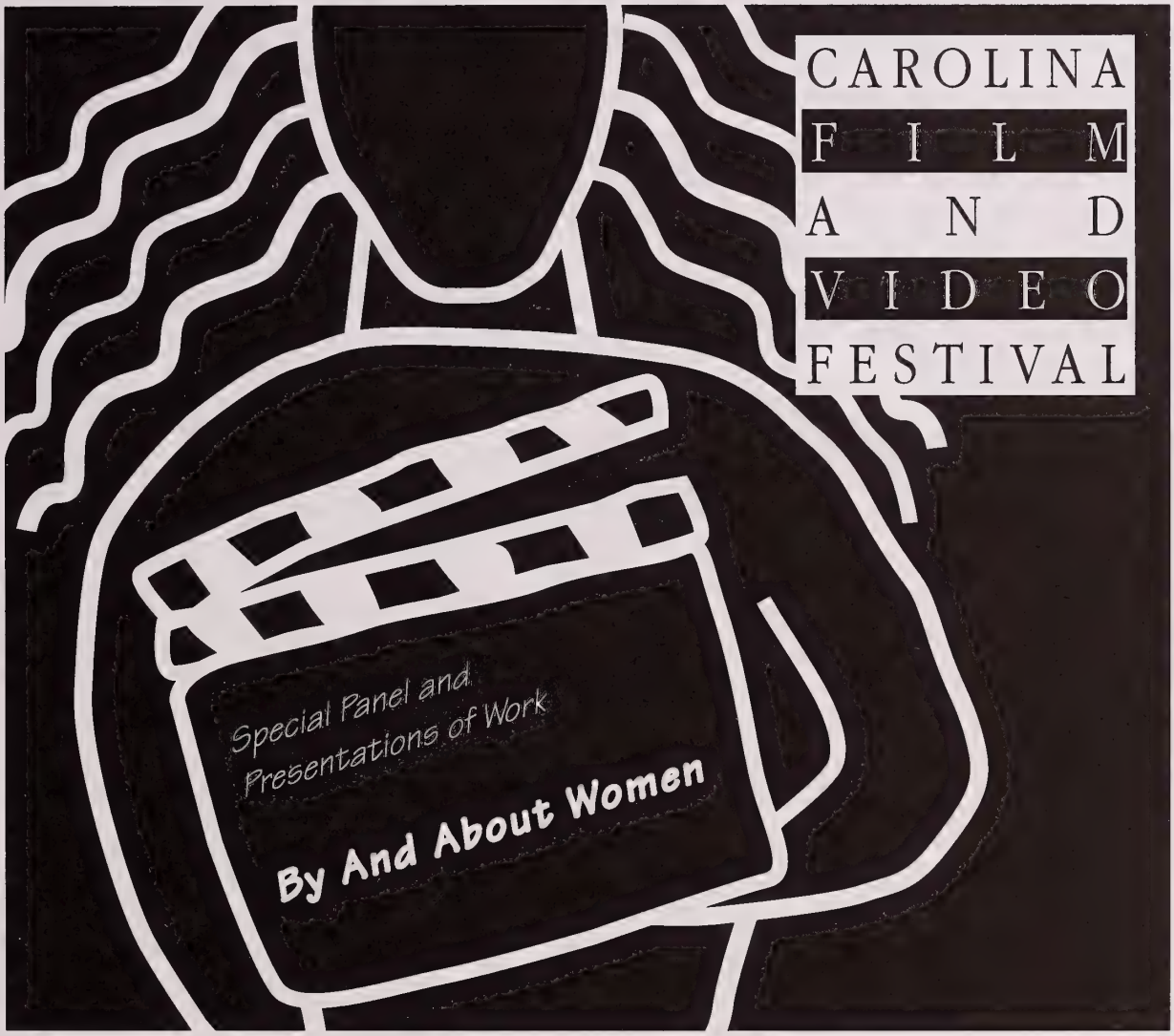
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Third World Views

To the editor:

For 25 years, Third World Newsreel has produced and distributed films and videos by and about people of color and social justice issues, providing production and technical assistance to independent film- and videomakers and community groups, and training new makers through our annual workshop program. As one of 41 arts organizations participating in the NEA Phase One Advancement process, we spent the past year analyzing our organizational structure and programs, and developing a three-year, long-range plan. As a result of this process, we are instituting many changes to build a stronger and more effective organization.

The Independent article on Third World Newsreel by Laura Marks ["Growing Pains: Third World Newsreel Endures a Bumpy Transition," December 1993] could have been an honest and accurate report of an arts organization in transition run by people of color. Instead, wrought with innuendo and false allegations, the article provides more of a basis for a libel suit than insightful analysis or reputable journalism. Marks relied heavily on allegations by two disgruntled former Newsreel contractors, while salient facts were deliberately omitted.

The article's claim of the "borrowing of funds" by officers is flatly untrue. Marks has reworked executive director Griffin's comments to imply impropriety when none exists. All Third World Newsreel films and videos, including the Audre Lorde film, are produced and owned by the organization. As such, we allocate funds as appropriate pursuant to each project's budget. Using the phrase "borrowed from the organization" is a patent misrepresentation of the organization's budgeting process. In addition, Marks made no attempt to contact the corporate secretary, JT Takagi, although she targeted her with the false accusation of fund misuse.

In another instance, the article implies that the office manager resigned due to the organization's problems when, in fact, she left to attend graduate school and has since offered her volunteer services.

The gravest allegation made in the article, however, concerns the Lawson incident. Marks' reporting of the arrest of David Lawson from the Black Audio Film Collective left out critical aspects of the story which would have given readers a more complete understanding of the episode. Marks didn't bother to report that it was Lawson's violent outburst directed at Newsreel workers that led to his arrest. We are generally opposed to police intervention. But in the midst of a contract dispute between Black Audio and Third World Newsreel, Lawson arrived unannounced at our offices and proceeded to verbally harass several office members while taking materials which did not legally belong to him. When his verbal threats escalated to physical assault, the alarmed staff, in fear for their safety, called the police. Although objective witnesses (including a UPS worker) were available, Marks failed to contact them. Her report cites only Lawson and individuals who were not present during the violence. It is profoundly disturbing that a professional journal and journalist would not present the full story, nor provide the facts.

At a time when nonprofit arts organizations, particularly those run by people of color, are becoming rarer, Third World Newsreel is one of the survivors. With the current leadership of our steering committee, new staff, and the continuing support of independent film/videomakers, we are making the necessary changes to be able to advance the work of and about people of color and social justice issues into the 21st century. Assessment and evaluation are essential to the development of our organization. However, Marks' article, which distorts events and makes no attempt at full and factual reporting, only serves to undermine the work and successes of Newsreel.

Third World Newsreel: Veen Cabreros-Sud, Kenyatta Tyehimba Funderburk, Ada Gay Griffin, Herman Lew, Orinne JT Takagi
New York, NY

To the editor:

I was dismayed at the gossipy tone of the article [on Third World Newsreel] and the imbalanced slant it presented by relying so heavily on admittedly disgruntled former employees.

Although many of the accusations leveled against Newsreel may have been based on facts, they are not unique to the organization. That doesn't excuse the lack of employee benefits or the "Mom and Pop" operation style, which was definitely inherited from earlier administrations, but it does point to specific problems that many nonprofits have had to address to survive and flourish.

The two points with which I take the most issue are the way in which the article hints that there was a misappropriation of funds by Griffin and Takagi and the lack of refutation of David Lawson's vilifying accusations against the organization. Since its inception, part of Newsreel's mission has been to produce its own documentary films. Historically, these films and tapes were generated by the staff and supported by the organization from conception through distribution. Upon completion, they belong to Newsreel. So to imply that Takagi and Griffin were misappropriating funds for "their" films displays an incomplete understanding of Newsreel's history, structure, and function.

With regards to Lawson's actions, the writer made no attempt to mitigate such a strong, potentially damaging statement against artists distributing their work with Newsreel. I wish she had explored more sides of the actual circumstances surrounding that entire unfortunate event, especially since Woolery was involved and felt it necessary to call the police to intervene. So even if Lawson and the Black Audio Film Collective had legitimate gripes, it was rather unfair to reprint such incendiary remarks remarks without contextualization.

Finally, I wish there had been a stronger presentation of the vitally important role Newsreel has played and continues to play in the lives of many, many up-and-coming young filmmakers. Despite its problems, the organization has served as one of the few (and often the only) tool for empowering artists of color with the ability to express their voices, realize their visions, and fulfill their dreams.

I applaud Newsreel's courageous efforts to correct its mistakes and move forward. I am confident the organization will not only survive this latest crisis, but will emerge a stronger, more powerful organization.

Daresha Kyi
Brooklyn, New York

Laura U. Marks responds:

Darisha Kyi is right that the transitions being experienced at Third World Newsreel are not unique among nonprofit media organizations. *The Independent* devoted an article to the events at Newsreel because of the organization's importance to the field. I made every effort to cover these extremely complex events as fairly and completely as possible. This effort included long and detailed discussions with Ada Gay Griffin, at which time she had ample opportunity to respond to each issue addressed in the article. I also spoke with Lillian Jimenez and many other mediamakers and administrators in the field. Length constraints forced me and *The Independent*'s editors to omit and/or condense some of the contextualizing information of this complicated story—a context that includes my own history of advocacy for Newsreel's work. But I believe the article reflects the difficult process of restructuring in a way that is respectful and fair to Third World Newsreel.

Expanding on Japan

To the editor:

Reading Scott Sinkler's article "Made in Japan: Upholding the Japanese Independent Tradition" [November 1993] made me realize how difficult it is to adequately survey *any* cultural heritage. Although offering a much needed overview of contemporary media activity in Japan, the article is noted for the following omissions:

1. The major center for independent, experimental film and video in Japan is Image Forum, Tokyo. Founded in the mid-seventies by Tomiyama Katsue, Image Forum maintains an active film/video exhibition venue, film/video production workshops, and publishes a magazine that supports critical debates in the visual arts.

2. Several film- and videomakers were noticeably absent from Sinkler's survey. Matsumoto Toshio has been making innovative films, videotapes and feature-length experimental narratives since the sixties. Based at the Kyoto College of Art, Matsumoto's work has been screened internationally and was acknowledged in David Desser's book *Eros Plus Massacre*. Kawanaka Nabuhiro is considered by many one of the most influential contemporary filmmakers in Japan. Through his critical writing, teaching, and prolific output as a filmmaker, Kawanaka-san has inspired a whole generation of contemporary Japanese imagemakers. Starting her career in the mid-seventies as an experimental filmmaker, Idemitsu Mako has

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created an impressive number of videotapes which, according to film historian Scott Nygren, "confront sexual role ideology in Japanese society." For example, in *The Great Mother* series, Idemitsu brings to our attention the fragility of mother-child relationships. Idemitsu's work has been shown throughout Japan and was included in Barbara London's New Video Japan program at the Museum of Modern Art. Most noticeably absent, however, was Himeda Tadayoshi, who has been actively working as a filmmaker for the past 30 years. Himeda-san has completed more than 90 films about indigenous Japanese cultures. Most notable has been his continued involvement in preserving the life and cultural heritage of the Ainu in northern Japan.

All of the above-mentioned individuals have made significant contributions to our collective understanding of the moving/electronic image. Their inclusion in any survey of contemporary Japanese media is essential.

Abraham Ravett
filmmaker and professor of Film/Photo at Hampshire College, MA

Scott Sinkler replies:

I hope readers won't take my 4,000-word overview as comprehensive, but will be stimulated to learn more. To receive information on Japanese independent media or to explore distribution possibilities in Japan, please contact these organizations:

Mrs. Keiko Araki
Pis Film Festival 2-5 Koji-machi, Chiyoda-ku
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fax: 03-3265-5659
independent film festival

Ms. Kanako Hayashi
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Ginza-Hata Bldg.
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Tokyo 104 JAPAN
promoter of Japanese films abroad

Mr. Akira Matsubara
Video Press
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fax: 03-3385-9464
video activist group

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REMAINS OF THE DAY



The skulls of Czar Nicholas II, his wife, and three daughters.
Photo: Chris Li, courtesy filmmakers

SAN FRAN PRODUCERS SETTLE DISPUTE WITH NOVA OVER CZAR FOOTAGE

Victoria Lewis and Frank Simeone, a pair of San Francisco-based filmmakers whose projects include *Louie Bluie* and *Live Water*, recently emerged from a year-long struggle with Boston PBS affiliate WGBH-TV and its award-winning *Nova* series. The parties involved battled over footage of the skeletal remains of the last Russian Czar, Nicholas II, and his family—a battle which, the filmmakers say, cost them more than $350,000; a potential distributor; court fees; and emotional wear and tear, not to mention valuable time and contacts. Moreover, they say, it has left their entire project—which has consumed much of the last two years—in a precarious state.

[IN THE BEGINNING]

The ordeal began in the spring of 1991, when Lewis was shown a videotape by her then Russian-language instructor. The tape, made by a Russian monk and smuggled through Germany, showed a man claiming two skulls he had found in a mine pit in Siberia were those of Nicholas II and his wife, Tsarina Alexander. The man went on to plead that a film be made of the find, so the royal couple could be "buried with honor and dignity." Lewis says she quickly answered the call, knowing that, if the man's claims turned out to be true, the film could be more than just a highly marketable project; it would be a rare and historic opportunity.

Lewis and Simeone spent the following months traveling back and forth to Russia, acquiring contacts, filming interviews, and compiling an immense amount of background research. By the time winter of 1992 rolled around, 75 percent of their documentary had been shot, and the filmmakers began sending out proposals for completion funds. In March 1993, executives at *Nova* requested a meeting to screen the footage that had been shot to date. After the execs saw the material, they offered $200,000—the exact amount of debt Lewis and Simeone had incurred, on the condition that Lewis and Simeone could receive written permission from Russian officials to film the actual skeletal remains, to which they had previously been denied access. The filmmakers declined and instead, Lewis says, suggested a coproduction deal that would allow them to continue work on the documentary. According to the filmmaker, *Nova* eventually agreed, although Eric Brass, *Nova*'s corporate counsel, has no recollection of such an agreement.

Spurred on by spoken promises of repayment (no written contract yet existed), the filmmakers sank additional funds into the project. They made several trips to Russia. Although their requests for access to the skeletal remains were consistently denied, they collected relevant footage each time.

[THE DEAL]

In June, a *Nova* executive faxed Lewis and Simeone an initial agreement. The contract offered the filmmakers director, producer, and writer credits; $200,000 for all footage including the remains; 25 percent of ancillary market distribution; and, according to Brass, the ability to produce their own film based on the same footage *Nova* was using. The fax, however, did not carry a signature, and out of their own naiveté, Lewis says, the filmmakers only verbally agreed to it. Not three days later, *Nova* and the filmmakers finally were granted permission to film the Czar's remains.

Bass says at that point, *Nova* became concerned the footage would not prove as useful as they had originality thought and expressed interest in continuing contract discussions. While overseas, the pair contracted a lawyer who drew up an awkward, and, according to the filmmakers, unofficial working agreement with *Nova* that was intended to allow both production teams to share the long sought-after shoot of a forensic anthropologist's examination of the bones. But the document ended up making a sticky situation even stickier.

The contract, which both attorneys agreed to, stated that, for $35,000, *Nova* would get the right to up to ten minutes of footage shot previously by the filmmakers.

While in London, they called *Nova* to

arrange for some money to be wired to them and learned of the $35,000 clause. "We were devastated," says Lewis. "After giving them the results of two years of research, four trips to Russia, our resources and connections and most importantly, the idea, they tell us we don't even have U.S. rights. We could not sell a $350,000 film to them for $35,000."

After receiving the agreement, *Nova* sent a recently appointed senior producer, Michael Barnes, to meet Lewis and Simeone in Moscow. Under somewhat strained circumstances, they managed to work together on the historic shoot.

A few months later, the filmmakers received a phone call from the senior producer who demanded they hand over the bone footage for less than cost, Lewis says. According to her and Simeone, the producer threatened to sue if they didn't agree. The two contacted their lawyer, who offered to sell *Nova* the finished documentary.

[THE BATTLE]

Lewis and Simeone soon received a summons from *Nova*, along with a temporary emergency restraining order that would give the series control over the footage of the remains. They were informed by *Nova*'s lawyers on November 29 that a hearing was scheduled for the following day—in Boston. The filmmakers arranged to put a second mortgage on their house to pay legal costs, which were expected to exceed $50,000. They managed to postpone the hearing for one day, just enough time to hire Boston lawyers to appear in court on their behalf.

A district court judge ruled that *Nova* could no longer seize the footage, and gave the parties 10 days to settle the dispute. "This is a very interesting project," remarked chief judge Joseph L. Tauro, "and it seems to me there are enough bouquets to go around."0=

[THE SETTLEMENT]

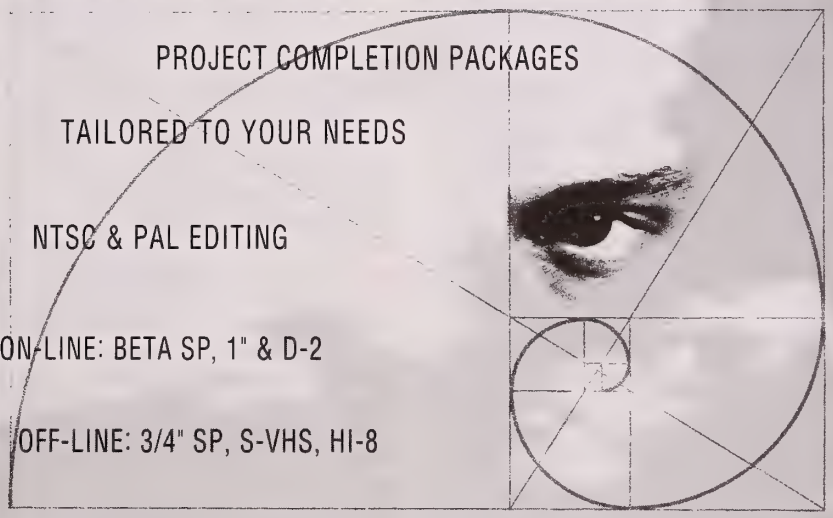
The eventual settlement allowed *Nova* to receive 10 minutes of footage, which they payed for at cost, while Lewis and Simeone kept the rest and maintained worldwide rights to their own documentary.

In an interview with *The Independent*, Jeanne Hopkins, *Nova*'s media relations director, said the series was pleased with the outcome of the settlement."We both have [the footage] now, and can go on to make our own films." She also explained that the only reason *Nova* took Lewis and Simeone to court was that the filmmakers were not sharing certain footage with them, so the series "had no other recourse."

This is not the first time that independents have had difficulties with *Nova*. Other mediamakers, such as New York-based Rufus Standefer, report similar stories. A number of years ago, the head of programming at *Nova*—who'd heard from a mutual acquaintance about Standefer's documentary on Appalacian acid rain—requested a

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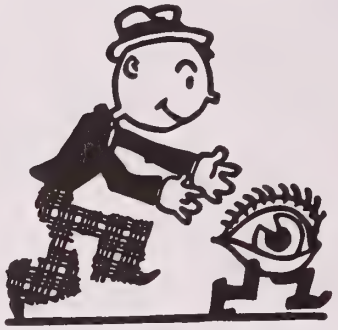
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proposal detailing his research and contacts. Like Lewis and Simeone, who were unaware of any potential for wrongdoing, Standefer handed over his hard-won resources, only to be avoided and, eventually, rejected by the series. Standefer later learned that *Nova* had sent a film crew out to interview his contacts. Standefer recalls viewing *Nova*'s final project and seeing some of the exact sequences, shot by shot, that he had outlined in his proposal. "It's pathetic," he says. "They're taking advantage of people who have nothing but their labor and research." Others who had similar experiences with *Nova* were contacted for this article, but refused to speak to *The Independent* on the record, even anonymously.

[THE MORAL]

At press time, Lewis and Simeone planned one final trip to Russia to film the funeral ceremony of the remains. They hope to have the finished film by spring, in time for it to make the rounds on the festival circuit. Yet they now have to beat out five other Romanov projects by such big timers as *60 Minutes*, *National Geographic*, and *Nova*, which will corner the PBS market and has already been presold abroad. The filmmakers say it's important for others to learn from their experience and to work closely with a lawyer in all stages of negotiation. Lewis recommends a hardnosed approach: "Have a contract and a lawyer before you give anyone any information, no matter how nice [he or she] seems. It happens so often, and for us, it almost destroyed our lives."

SUE MURRAY

Sue Murray is The Independent*'s editorial assistant.*

NO SHORT CUTS FOR L.A.'S FELLINI THEATER

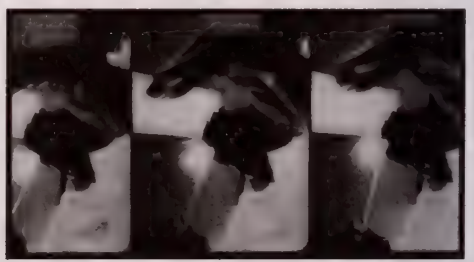
The proposed Fellini Theater will sit on a quiet stretch of Santa Monica Boulevard in Hollywood, where a handful of small, dusty theaters lean shoulder to shoulder. This is Theater Row, home to experimental theater, performance art, works-in-progress, and the cream of Los Angeles' low-budget live theater scene. With the opening as early as this spring of the Fellini, a small theater devoted to the screening of films under an hour-and-a-half in length, a clear and adventurous voice will be added to the mix.

The Fellini is a newly formed nonprofit organization for the makers of shorts and the dreamchild of Doug Piburn, a super 8 filmmaker. Piburn singlehandedly recruits members, organizes events, and promotes them. In an interview with *The Independent*, Piburn said he envisions three types of films being shown at the Fellini when it opens: recently produced independent shorts, retrospectives of short works from such well-known makers as Ken Jacobs and Stan Brakhage, and bigger-budget shorts that are available through distributors.

Tall and lanky, with an enthusiastic manner he dons like a super hero's cape, Piburn explained the type of maker he hopes his organization will attract. "I am determined to champion small filmmakers... the ones who are out there not making any money at it, not making short films as a calling card to get into the industry, but those who are making films that they just *have* to make, films that are so personal and so real and so immediate that they just have no choice."

Piburn explained that he had made the Fellini his personal mission because no such theater exists in Hollywood. "There is no full-time movie theater where Angelenos can see the latest 16mm, 35mm, super 8, and video shorts. L.A. is the film capital of the world and the conspicuous lack of presence [of such outlets] in Los Angeles is absurd."

Last year saw a vehement outcry from film- and videomakers when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced it would eliminate short documentary and live-action short categories from its awards ceremony. As a result, the academy decided to postpone its decision for one year ["On the Outs with Oscar," March 1993]. So Piburn may be on to something. "Short films need to be viewed on their own terms, not just as a substitute for a cartoon on a feature film program. I am caught up in the underground romance of shorts, and I believe there is an audience for them here in Los Angeles, and in other cities, too."



Film shorts like Bart Mallard's *Burn Heads* will get top billing at the new Fellini theater in Los Angeles. Courtesy filmmaker

A membership organization, the Fellini will screen films that have been submitted with a $75 annual membership fee. Piburn added, however, that membership will not guarantee a screening. "I'm not going to show just anything. I view each film with a jury, and we reserve the right to refuse films that don't meet our standards," he said. "We're looking for a boldness of vision and, of course, some technical authority."

In mid-December, Piburn organized the First Annual Great North American Short Film Festival, which featured a total of 18 works culled from more than 30 submissions. The festival took place at the World

Theater, near the location where Piburn hopes to house the Fellini. A variety of intense, personal, short, shorter, and very short films were screened to six different sold-out audiences. Among the films featured were Rogelio Lobato's *The Addict* (40 min., 16mm); Robin Scovilli's *La Vergine degli Angeli* (four min., 35mm); Maxene Vener's *Under the Daisies* (12 min., 16mm); and John Axelrod's *Play Is the Work of Children* (eight min., 16mm). Comments from audience members in the screening's sign-in book were unanimously positive. One woman gushed, "At last! A home for shorts!"

Piburn welcomes submissions from film- and videomakers in any format. Submissions for the opening festival included so many super 8 films, Piburn said he plans to organize a super 8 festival this summer. For more information and submission guidelines, call (213) 669-1625.

JULIA ROBINSON SHIMIZU

Julia Robinson Shimizu is a Los Angeles area writer whose article on L.A.C.E. and FILM-FORUM appeared in the January/February 1994 issue of The Independent.

{JACKIE SHEARER: 1946-1993}

A woman of incredible commitment, warmth, and sense of mission passed from us on November 26, 1993. Jacqueline Anne Shearer, or Jackie as most people knew her, was a rare, honest blend of veteran filmmaker and agent for social change. Surrounded by family and friends, Jackie died at age 46 from colon cancer. She was at home in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Although I knew of Jackie for a long time, I met her only once in 1992 at the "Available Visions" conference on black film distribution in the Bay area. I would not see her again, but she left an indelible mark on me as a person deeply committed to film, social change, and personal vision. Calm, articulate, and careful with her observations, Jackie clearly commanded a room when she spoke. You knew that, even if someone did not agree with her, she at least listened and heard the person. There was truly something special about her. I admired her patience and willingness to give of herself to those in need.

A pioneer black woman in film, Jackie came to the medium through her desire to link activism and media as tools for social change. Already involved with educational issues in her community, she became a founding member of Boston Newsreel and began teaching herself how to make film. Although she is probably best known for her work in historical documentary—*The Massachusetts 54th Colored Infantry* (1991); *The Promised Land* and *The Keys to the Kingdom* (both segments of the second series of *Eyes on the Prize*, which aired in 1989)—Jackie's work in film was extremely varied and com-



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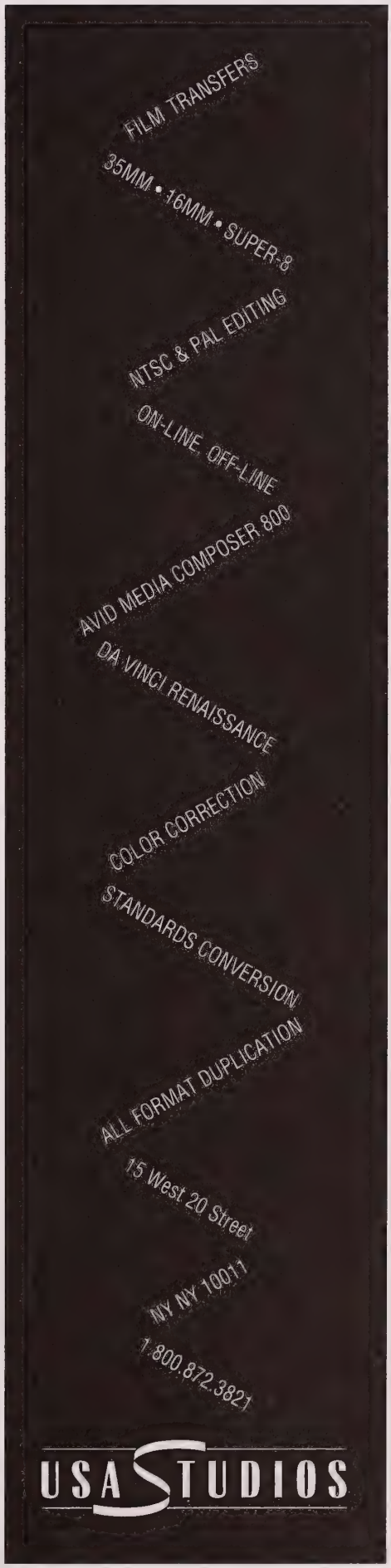
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plex; she did everything from slide shows on tenants' rights to PSAs on the Nestle infant formula boycott campaign to video installations on the history of the civil rights movement.

A Minor Altercation (1977), a drama about the aftermath of a school fight between two girls—one black and one white—explores the issues of racism, class, gender, and school bureaucracy. I first saw the film while still an undergraduate at Brown University and I remember how important it was in provoking painful, but necessary, discussions among both white students and students of color. Ten years later, I used the film as part of a Third World film course I was teaching at Antioch College, and I was surprised at how it still generated passion and heated discussion among the students.

Jackie seemed to have a knack for being in the right place at the right time to make things happen, and she was often the catalyst for good things happening. In July 1976, working with her friend Lyn Levy, Jackie became the founding chair of the board of Span, Inc., the only independent nonprofit



Courtesy Paul Stekler

program for offenders and ex-offenders in Massachusetts. She continued in this post until her death. Jackie also served as board president of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) in 1992, a difficult period in the organization's development.

For the last 10 years, Jackie had been working on a feature film, *Addie and the Pink Carnations*. The project helped her get through the pain of her cancer. Set in 1930's Harlem, the script sought to portray a critical but neglected piece of African-American labor and women's history.

Because Jackie divided her time between New York and Boston, memorial services were held in both cities. The first took place at the African Meeting House in Boston and was attended by nearly 150 individuals; the second service in Harlem at the Schomberg Center attracted 75. Tributes were offered by Charlayne Haynes, Henry Hampton, Alexa Birdsong, and B. Ruby Rich, among others. With Jackie's passing, we lost a great artist and advocate among independent filmmakers.

A fund has been established in Jackie's

name to support the work of African American women filmmakers. Contributions should be mailed to: The Jackie Shearer Fund, c/o The Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

ZEINABU IRENE DAVIS

Zeinabu Irene Davis is a filmmaker who lives in Chicago and teaches film and video production at Northwestern University.

SEQUELS

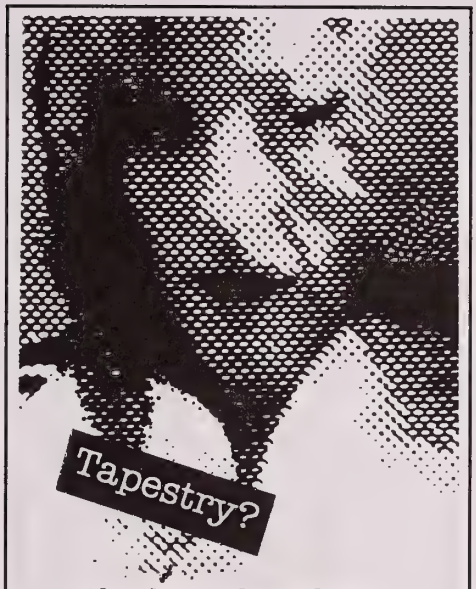
Ervin S. Duggan recently took over as president of the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). Duggan is a member of the Federal Communications Commission and a Washington insider. He will succeed **Bruce Christensen**, who left PBS in August after nine years as president to become dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications at Brigham Young University in Utah. One of Duggan's goals is for PBS to take a leading role in the creation of a national system for the exchange of computerized information, and the *New York Times* reported Duggan as saying, "Joint ventures must be part of the future." PBS, founded in 1969, currently has 346 member stations.

•

PBS Home Video has officially severed its ties with **Pacific Arts Video** after the distribution company's financial woes were made public in 1993 ["Where's the Cash? Pacific Arts Doles Out I.O.U.s," October 1993]. Pacific Arts was hired to operate PBS Home Video in 1992 after the network announced a controversial policy that allowed PBS first dibs on institutional and home video rights for all PBS-funded productions. A statement from the Coalition for Public Television Program Access and Diversity regarding PBS's decision to sever its ties with Pacific Arts points out that the network's mass-market strategy backfired, hurting not only producers, to which it owes millions of dollars, but educational video distributors, who previously excelled at finding audiences for PBS programming. At press time, PBS was shopping for another home video partner.

•

Lives in Hazard, a documentary about gang violence by husband-and-wife filmmakers Susan Todd and Andy Young, which was screened at the 1993 IFFM ["High Anxiety at the Angelika": December 1993] will be broadcast Friday, March 4 on NBC. The special will air together with a town meeting on the subject, produced by the network's news division.



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FOR THE HEART OF IT

BY ROBERT ANBIAN

The Peace Navy won. Or at least it declared victory when the "other navy" announced that 1993 was the last year of Fleet Week, when the big ships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet parade in San Francisco Bay and the city rattles under the sonic booms of the Blue Angels.

For years the Peace Navy, a ragtag collection of recreational sailors, peaceniks, and pick-up camera crews of Bay Area documentary activists, has been disrupting the annual display of gun metal hubris by sailing anti-war floats past the reviewing stands and generally getting in the way—much to the distress and boos of the city's many military and civic boosters. The media activists among them would quickly send out their tapes, which were picked up in places as far afield as Asia and Europe and carried over CNN, while local television would turn a blind eye to the protest.

Media activists, from veteran documentarians to youthful camcorder guerrillas, did the same thing when the Gulf War brought out seas of protesters in the largest demonstrations since the Vietnam era. They sent round the world a dramatic image of the San Francisco-Berkeley-Oakland nexus once again marching to its own drummer.

Meanwhile, film and videomakers of several stripes, long frustrated in attempts to get work aired over local pubcaster KQED Channel 9, have taken to projecting their pieces *on the station*—on the building's side wall, to be exact—to the delight of audiences and puzzlement of the cops, who can't quite figure out if a projection beam trespasses.

Outdoor projections, in fact, have enjoyed something of a vogue of late, resuming a Bay Area legacy that extends from a group of early sixties experimental filmmakers projecting their work on a sheet hanging in a backyard in Canyon, California, to Black Panther films projected on the walls of Berkeley a decade later, to early eighties renegade-art projections into the rearview mirrors of cars whipping along the old Embarcadero Freeway. Recent shows, drawing up to 1,000 people, have included Bay Area historical documentaries at the tourist-centered Powell and Market cable car turnaround, personal home movies at 6th and Market (San Francisco's skid row), a show on urbanism in a parking lot, and a slide show of photos by homeless and low-income people projected in the moneyed canyons of the financial district.



The audience for the mad, *bad*, and unusual in moving image media runs wide and deep in the Bay Area.
Photo: Bill Plummer, courtesy S.F. Visitors Bureau (p. 13 & 15)

These downtown shows have sometimes had to avail themselves of the outlaw tech skills of the Bay Area's many post-punk (cyber-, biker-, and hardcore-) mediamakers to cut off interfering street lights. One respectable curator was seen dipping into the electrical works of a huge street lamp while a cohort stood by ready with a wooden block to knock the curator away if a wrong connection was made.

All the while, the entertainment editor of the morning daily, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, has been raving that he's sick of all the multi-

hued and ideological film festivals that jam the Bay Area calendar and show all these arty and agitprop works and *shorts* and other oddities and who cares about the "urban art scene" anyway and he's not going to cover any of it anymore! Some writers who could care about independent media—or any culture other than the homogenized sort—have been given their walking papers, and cultural coverage has headed steadily suburban and *USA Today*-ish. Still, the audience for the mad, *bad*, and unusual in moving image media runs wide and deep in the Bay Area and doesn't seem much affected, so far, by the coverage blackout.

The smaller afternoon daily, the *San Francisco Examiner*, has taken up some of the coverage slack, while the local alternative weeklies have discovered independent film—now that becoming a "movie director" has taken on some of the same allure for the young as becoming a rock star—though they've done so with a certain persistent juvenility. Perhaps for that reason, neither the *Bay Guardian* nor the *S.F. Weekly* have yet managed, relative to their own milieu, the same clout as, say, the *Village Voice* or the *L.A. Weekly*.

A new film commission has been doing a bang-up job of reversing San Francisco's reputation as an expensive and difficult (sheesh, those activists!) place to shoot. More Hollywood production means more work for industry crafts people, no small number of whom live other lives as independent film- and videomakers. That's good news (although media job seekers far outnumber available jobs, and will for as long as the Bay Area remains an exceptionally desirable place to live). The commission actually has a broad mandate to nurture local talent and the independent filmmaking community. There are subcommittees and public hearings on the matter, but (here's the bad news) just about anything anybody thinks of doing for independents—as in hiring or training or underwriting local media arts—only threatens to raise the cost of commercial shooting. The nabobs of union and business, who sit on the commission like old bulldogs, aren't going to have that. So it's all talk and no walk.

Then there is the booming success of "Multimedia Gulch" to consider. Centered on South Park, an oval of grass surrounded by Victorian-era buildings, the Gulch is where cutting-edge computer-animation-special effects companies like Colossal and Xaos are creating some of the most visually innovative TV commercials and MTV fare today, bringing another economic underpinning to the media arts scene. But already the days of nothing-to-lose start-up companies, long on artistic adventure and financial naiveté, have become the stuff of nostalgia and legend as success reins in adventure and enforces financial discipline. Imagine, it's a dream of some of these companies to move into more "content-based" productions, that is, do something like what independents do.

So it goes. "It's a constant process," as one long-time commentator on the cultural scene puts it, "of renewal and disillusionment."

Locating Oz-by-the-Bay

A mordant joke makes the rounds: If Camus said the only truly philosophical question is whether or not to commit suicide, the Bay Area independent wakes up saying, "Is this the day I move to L.A.?"

It's a witticism that in its stereotypical way is a bit unfair to both places. After all, there are plenty of market-defying artists in Los Angeles and plenty of Hollywood in San Francisco. But much of the "Hollywood" that is here, like screenwriter Joe Eszterhas, actors Danny Glover and Robin Williams, and the "three big sausages," as we like to say, of local feature filmmaking—Coppola, Lucas, and producer Saul Zaentz—represent a somewhat maverick orbit around the industry. Albeit even they also operate at some distance from the in-the-trenches world of local independents. (Not forgetting their roots, however, Glover and Williams are ubiquitous at local benefits; Zaentz (*Amadeus*, *The Right Stuff*) not only runs the renowned Fantasy Building in Berkeley, where many independents have offices and can share a community of interests, but has also done a great deal to bring postproduction work to Northern California.) At the same time, Los Angeles, for all its size and dynamism, remains largely a one-industry town that puts independent media artists in a very long shadow and provides surprisingly few support services or even audiences for them.

One punkish experimental maker, who, like so many here comes from someplace else—Austin, Texas in this case—puts it this way: "I would have gone to Los Angeles if craft were most important, New York if career were tops. I came to San Francisco for the heart of it."

It's a theme you'll hear often, setting up a perhaps inevitable three-way comparison among the cities. Says a video curator, himself a transplant from Southern California: "The L.A. media scene is big but not that significant for independents. In New York there's that edge where succeeding is everything. In S.F. there's a balance between pursuing form and style as individual expression and seeking success." A young documentary maker from New York says, "In L.A. an independent is an anomaly. New York has surprisingly little base of support for independent work. But in San Francisco, no matter what level you're at, you can be taken seriously. You can find support, have shows, meet other filmmakers. You don't have to be pre-selling to German ZDF to get attention." This woman plans eventually to return to New York—"just a much bigger sounding board"—but chooses to spend her formative years where she finds both community support and the freedom to explore artistic form. "People come here to dream, not exchange business cards," avers one scene-watcher. Another artist waxes poetically: "New York is Rome, Los Angeles is Byzantium, but San Francisco, ah, San Francisco is Florence."

All of which is interesting, given that New York and L.A. are clearly "first tier" cities in terms of size and power, while San Francisco is, strictly speaking, a second tier city, more akin, say, to Amsterdam—or indeed, Florence—than to Paris or London. And yet, culturally, especially in the media arts, the San Francisco Bay Area seems to levitate above its second tier status. Always a critical mass of cultural ferment—"Yow!" as localite Zippy the Pinhead would say—the Bay Area's creative outbursts are periodically absorbed by the culture at large without its ever exactly becoming a power center itself in terms of media money and decision-making. That is its distinctive virtue, and also its burden.

San Francisco may be the country's preeminent center for independent, noncommercial, and broadly oppositional media arts. One can certainly see more, and more diverse, independent work here in any week than in L.A., or even New York. Large numbers of independents, wherever they're coming from and wherever they're headed, come through town sooner or later. Places as far-flung as Melbourne, Australia, and Cork, Ireland, not to mention New York's Museum of Modern Art, have staged showcases of Bay Area work. It's a reputation that has more to do with the power of imagination than the power of success. Another sly joke goes: "In San Francisco, the emperor definitely has no clothes...but who cares; she has a beautiful bod."

Place & Philosophy

Community. It's a word you'll hear over and over again as a kind of mantra of collective identity. Aside from the grandeur of nature in these parts, the sweeping cinematic views from almost any corner, the blue skies, an intimacy of scale in the geography, the stunning architecture, plus good food and coffee, artists mean community when they talk about quality of life. They speak of "having a life and not just a career."

This "community" of artists—and of arts presenters, organizers, and audiences—tends to wear its shared values on its sleeves, genuinely if too pridefully and self-consciously at times. It is both an idealized community and a community of idealists. Its values lie in an appreciation of diversity, in a concern for social justice, in not only the freedom but the encouragement to stretch boundaries, to be outrageous and take a combative stance—ranging from outright rejection to trickery—toward the strictures of the mass market.

This core concern with community may be dismissed by some as a vestige of 1960s counterculturism. If there's some truth to that, it is also true that the sixties themselves, and the persistence of sixties values, must be placed in a much broader historical context. Artists throughout modern times, in both progressive and reactionary ways, have sought to recover, reconstruct, or reinvent human community in the face of the corrosive and atomizing effects of mass market economics.

Of course, this *is* an idealized picture, true but also riddled and ani-

mated by contradiction. Its material truth can be found in part in the vitality of the many artist organizations in the area. Media arts organizations like Canyon Cinema and San Francisco Cinematheque (which shared their birth in that backyard in Canyon, California), Film Arts Foundation and Bay Area Video Coalition (both founded by makers seeking access to equipment), plus California Newsreel, Frameline, National Asian American Telecommunications Arts, Artists' Television Access, East Bay Media Center, and Cine Acción attest to the reality of community. These organizations, though feeling the nationwide arts funding pinch, grew from the grass roots, and still operate very much as social centers, retaining the social and community base that has helped them weather contrary winds.

The material community is also found in the sheer numbers of artists here. It's been often said that there are more independent film- and videomakers per capita here than anyplace else on the planet. Such is the mass of mediamakers here that many discrete milieus can thrive without ever really intersecting. That's one of the contradictions: "the myth," as one critic puts it, "that there is a media community.... There are many media communities." And to some degree the strength of numbers allows each of these communities to draw in on itself, become insular, and to negate the larger community.

That, along with the area's anything-goes ethos and distaste for competitiveness, underlies one of the most oft-heard complaints directed at "the community" by its own members—that there is a lack of critical edge to much of the interaction here. "It's almost too supportive!" exclaims the young documentarian from New York. A more grizzled veteran says it *is* too supportive: "Almost anyone can throw stuff up on the screen and develop a following... there's a lack of standards, of definition." Says a programmer in more measured tones: "The degree of tolerance is great, but sometimes it acts to encourage mediocrity."

It can also foster the habits of insulation and disassociation from the larger society—and its values and problems—that have often lent the Bay Area its "exotic" aura. There's the old line about San Francisco being the place "where young people come to retire."

Something Completely Different

"Lies! All lies!" he shouts when it's suggested to him that community, social tolerance, and an anti-commercial stance are keys to the Bay Area media arts scene. This guy is a reasonably successful documentary maker, and has another work coming out in the spring. He's been in the Bay Area media community for about as long as anyone. "It's a big cop-out," he says about the prevalent anti-commercialism, "an excuse for failure." He's equally unimpressed with the notions of political engagement that animate so many Bay Area artists: "Most people fighting for freedom here have never been enslaved." Querulous, excitable, iconoclastic, he seems, even while disavowing it, the very stuff of the scene. "San Francisco," he sums up, "is a great place to be coddled...an excellent place for lazy people." When challenged on his own presence here, he happily shrugs, "I'm lazy!"

The View from Here

Actually, it's so damned expensive to live here, and so difficult to make a living with your craft much less with your art, that it's a wonder any artists, lazy or not, remain. And that famous tolerance—the moveable feast of the young and artistic and politically active—in fact rubs up uncomfortably against a far more middle American ethos. For all their history and bravado, there is also a constant feeling of crisis in the arts communities of the Bay Area. The very promise of the place, of its heightened idealism, crossed by the realities of being an artist in this society, can produce that much more of a siege mentality.

So it goes. It is a community often in crisis, although enduring, turning on one of those historical hinges that seem to connect hope and despair, and also perhaps different generations that have come of age in very different epochs. In the face of their own contradictions, against the grain of mass market economics, often more honored elsewhere than at home, Bay Area independents are making perhaps even more work than ever. Given the temper of the times, the conversational assessment among independents can sound downbeat. But there's all that work being done. And there is an incipient certainty that in a brave new world of 500 TV channels, where sameness chases out difference; where the sensational and shallow pushes out the literate and challenging; and where reality takes a back seat to fantasy compensation, the need for fearless independent media will be greater than ever. Sometimes you show the truth, and no one comes. Sometimes you show the truth, and the world holds its breath. In between times, artists keep working.

Robert Anbian recently published a book of poems, Antinostalgia *(Ruddy Duck Press, Buffalo). He is the editor of* Release Print, *the newsletter of Film Arts Foundation.*

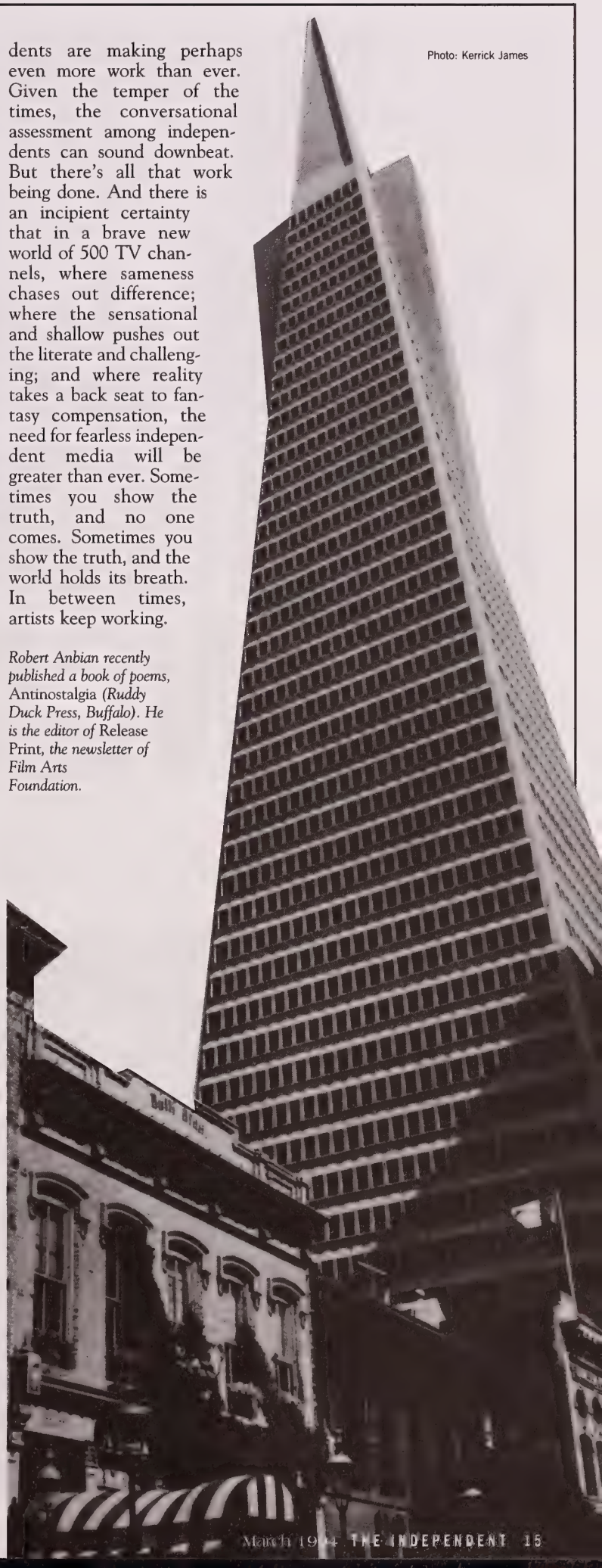


Photo: Kerrick James

PLAYING SAN FRANCISCO

BY ROBERT ANBIAN

San Francisco *is* a great movie town: great for audiences and with great audiences. No doubt the sheer number of film- and videomakers in the area helps nurture audiences who have a special regard for film as artistic expression.

The Bay Area experienced the rigors of multiplexing and the deaths of art houses and dollar-a-double-bill repertory theaters along with the rest of the nation. But things seem to have stabilized—for the moment—and not only do a core of art and rep houses survive, but some of the multiplexing has also benefitted the richness of film watching in the area. At the same time, the Bay Area's baroque web of alternative spaces remains exceptionally vital. Local independents have a wild assortment of places in which to watch world cinema, and venues from storefronts and movie palaces to plush multiplex mini-theaters in which to get their own work shown.



The Exploratorium's "Film Night on the Bay."
Photo: Esther Kutnick, courtesy Exploratorium

Multiplexes like the AMC Kabuki 8 Theaters in San Francisco's Japantown and Opera Plaza Cinemas in the Civic Center run foreign and American independent films alongside mainstream industry fare. The Kabuki serves as showhouse for a number of local festivals, including the San Francisco International Film Festival (a film lover's fest that serves as a doorway to U.S. markets for many foreign films, as well as fitfully recognizing local independents), the Asian American International Film Showcase, and the American Indian Film Festival. Local independent media organizations such as San Francisco Cinematheque, Film Arts Foundation, and New American Makers, which brings video art into theaters, have successfully mounted shows of independent film and video at both complexes. It would appear that multiplexes in the right environment and with creative management can do a lot to feed audiences for independent cinema.



Former porn house turned movie lovers' lair, the Roxie Cinema is the venue for FAF's annual Film Arts Festival.

Photo: Peter Marcus, courtesy Film Arts Foundation

Some of the best of what has happened in local exhibition is what didn't. The Castro Theater, a movie palace offering one of the grandest film-watching experiences on the planet, did not get multiplexed by its corporate parent, the Blumenthal theater chain, which has also declined to homogenize its programming. If I were a filmmaker, I think heaven would be seeing my piece projected on the big Castro screen under that great rococo ceiling—with live organ accompaniment, of course—before a full house of Bay Area mediaphiles. It's an experience more than a few local independents have had. The Castro pursues a schedule that combines golden Hollywood revivals and restored classics with new foreign and independent work. Located in the heart of the city's

famed gay district, the Castro also serves as home venue for the burgeoning gay media community and is one of two main houses for the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, the country's highest-profile gay film fest. The Castro is also the San Francisco venue for the Jewish Film Festival.

Actually, there's even been a revival of the movie palace experience. The city's beautiful Alhambra, which shows mainstream first-run films, was recently de-twinned and restored to grandeur. South of the city, the Stanford Theater in Palo Alto is a lovingly renovated palace showing classic repertory, often in new prints, and with live organ accompaniment to silent films. A number of other single-screen houses of varying vintages help make the Bay Area a friendly place for foreign and non-mainstream film.

Important for independents, a coterie of what were once called 'art houses' survives and even thrives in the Bay Area, always owing to the dedication of those who run them. They show revivals and foreign films and carry adventurous bills of local and U.S. independent work. In the city's Mission District, the Roxie Cinema continues a great local tradition of art house programming, including the anomalies of having been severely picketed for showing Godard's scandalous *Hail Mary* and having as its all time top-grossing film the reverential documentary *Mother Theresa*. A former porno house turned into a movie-lover's dive by a group that included filmmakers, the Roxie is the main house for the annual Film Arts Festival, a five-day fest of made-in-the-Bay Area independent work. It also shows part of the S.F. Lesbian and Gay Fest.

In the Haight-Ashbury area, the worker-owned-and-operated Red Vic Movie House, recently secured from tenancy difficulties, offers a schedule that combines classic repertoire with local-angle psychedelic archaeo-cinema (like the 1967 Jack Nicholson-penned *The Trip*) and made-in-town independent media.

Across the bay in Berkeley, Landmark's UC Theater gives a lot of marquée time to independent work, including documentaries and programs of shorts. It also provides an East Bay outlet for festivals like the American Indian Film Fest, the Jewish Film Festival, and the National Educational Film and Video Festival. It is the main house for the East Bay Video Festival, an important showcase for, among other things, video by people with disabilities.

With all this, the Bay Area's most distinctive feature may be the number and variety of its alternative viewing spaces. They range from Berkeley's Pacific Film Archive, where—with all the stature of a museum and state-of-the-art theater—everything is concocted from innovative bills of international and independent cinema to the newest in conceptual video works, to San Francisco's Artists' Television Access. At this storefront-cum-exhibition/video editing space, you're as likely to see *Nanook of the North* as video poems by local stripper-activists.

San Francisco Cinematheque screens programs at the San Francisco Art Institute and satellite gallery spaces, cultivating an eclectic lineage—and eclectic audiences—of moving-image media as art, including *really obscure* restorations. It also offers willing viewers the latest in all that carries on the broad aesthetic and political strategies of experimental media. S.F. Cinematheque balances an international outlook with attention to local makers. With the near collapse of its exhibition in other places, the San Francisco Cinematheque remains a national standard-bearer for experimental American film.

Other programmers of specialty shows, often including independent work, include the Exploratorium and the Goethe Institute in the city; La Peña Cultural Center in Berkeley; and the Oakland Museum. Once a year, the Cinema department at San Francisco State stages a raucous and much-loved "Film Finals" show of graduating students' works. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has been mounting video installations with commendable vigor under the curatorship of Robert Riley, but the museum that pioneered the idea of "Film as Art" in the late 1940s has no regular exhibition of film, which irks local filmmakers. San Francisco's ambitious new Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (either a depressing post-mod warehouse or an inspired art garden complex, depending on to whom you speak) pays more attention to static art and theater than to film, but in the near future it will host shows by Cinematheque, New American Makers, and the new Big Green Screen, an environmental film festival in its second year.



Photo: Chuck Hudina

Meanwhile, in a way that is perhaps as much an affirmation of the richness of exhibition here than of anything dying out, San Francisco's legendary No Nothing Cinema sits in limbo. An obscurely located Lamborghini garage-turned-filmmaker's screening space, No Nothing's own annual "Film Is Dead" programs throughout the eighties had mocked the very anxieties that seems to haunt its existence, affirming the happy anarcho-aesthetic spirit that has always seemed to be at the heart of the artist's world here. Filmmakers would cut ephemeral films just to get a piece in a show at a place that had no admission charge, was never covered in the press, and was often packed. Founded by filmmakers in the early eighties, it was a place where artists could show their films in the way they wanted, in a purely aesthetic way, as "amateurs"—for the love of it—as both Brakhage and Cocteau had it. The facility's operating program was so minimal, says one participant, that it was called "no nothing": the founders could agree on little else. Refusing to institutionalize itself, No Nothing depended on the volunteer efforts of the participating makers. There were a lot of great scenes, from private premieres to wide open screenings, in a place featuring an outdoor courtyard where food was barbecued and people played music and danced. Inside, a small theater boasted a full-size screen and projection booth—and seats on risers.

Today that original group, still working artists by and large, has aged into other challenges or moved to other places, and finds itself collectively without the time to keep the No Nothing running. For the moment, no one has stepped forward to pick up the game. At the same time, the No Nothing, situated in a row of dilapidated warehouses at China Basin (south of downtown), awaits eventual eviction to make room for some great urban enterprise, probably a sports arena. That prospect no doubt helps discourage volunteers for this purist venture. Or maybe that's just the life this kind of artistic project lives, a robust decade uncodified in any form other than in people's memories.

One of the last shows staged at No Nothing was a goodbye tribute to Dean Snider, a No Nothing founder and somewhat irascible experimental filmmaker, who, suffering from Parkinson's disease, was leaving the Bay Area to fight his illness. The event, titled "A Life Is *Not* Film: The *Almost* Complete Works of Dean Snider," involved two days of screenings and gatherings. The first night featured a retrospective of Snider's work, including such infamous films as *Where's Betty?* and *Owh!!! That Was My Penis You Stepped On!* The second day, starting at 3 p.m., involved a challenge from Snider to show one of his own films for every film someone else brought to the No Nothing. The result was an eyeball-peeling marathon of every kind of work of nearly every kind of quality. Well after midnight, when virtually all the audience had gone home, Snider, half-crippled but irascible still, was struggling with a projector that had gone wrong and working repairs on it until it could run the last of the films that had been brought. Snider was good to his challenge.

The KQED Conundrum

BY MICHAEL FOX

With appropriate fanfare, San Francisco's venerable public television station KQED celebrates its 40th anniversary throughout 1994. From the perspective of independent producers, the history of the nation's fifth-largest public broadcaster can be characterized as years of support followed by a freeze-out of glacial proportions. More change is in the wind: The recent hiring of a new president who advocates original programming portends better times ahead, and local filmmakers are acknowledging KQED's milestone with a muted, cautiously optimistic clinking of glasses.

KQED went on the air in 1954 as the fifth educational television station in the country, initially broadcasting in black-and-white for two hours, two nights a week. As the schedule expanded, programming ranged from *The Elements* with nuclear physicist Glenn Seaborg to critic Ralph J. Gleason's *Jazz Casual* to *Eastern Wisdom and Modern Life* with Zen philosopher Alan Watts. The station soon developed a national reputation for important, risky projects with *The Rejected*, a groundbreaking 1961 documentary on gay men, and *Take This Hammer*, a 1964 doc about racism in San Francisco with writer James Baldwin.

By the time the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) replaced National Educational Television (NET) in 1970, KQED had 43,000 members and 164 staffers. The station expanded, acquiring Channel 32, which it rechristened KQEC and dedicated to minority audiences. That same year, KQED was named one of the seven national production centers for public television.

But the seventies were a mixed bag for public TV and especially for KQED. Even as the stuffy image of educational television was replaced by one of adventurous programming and dynamic community involvement, a decline in viewer contributions and President Richard Nixon's veto of the Public Broadcasting Act—the first bill to include advanced multiyear funding for public television—prompted a budget crunch that triggered layoffs and forced KQEC to go dark. Cuts in programming and rising commercialization angered many of KQED's members. The Center for Experiments in Television, an experimental TV lab established at KQED in 1967, was closed in 1974. The station's refusal to work out programming relationships with independent producers provoked the Committee to Save KQED, a watchdog group led by Henry Kroll and Laurence Hall, to lobby the new California Public Broadcasting Commission—the first steps in the long process that eventually resulted in the creation of the Independent Television Service (ITVS). Nonetheless, by mid-decade KQED was recording the highest prime-time ratings of any PBS affiliate and had moved into a state-of-the-art facility.



KQED's new digs.
Photo: Kingmond Young, courtesy KQED

Meanwhile, the board members evolved from public educators to corporate executives. The recruitment of Anthony S. Tiano in 1978, and later President Ronald Reagan's defunding of public broadcasting and the relaxing of corporate underwriting rules, ushered in a new era of institutional entrepreneurship at KQED. Tiano aggressively increased membership by targeting the burgeoning ranks of yuppies. He also revamped the skinny monthly program guide into *Focus*, a glossy, upscale lifestyle magazine.

However, once the station's revenue became dependent on multinational corporations and middle-class, primarily white members, minority and social-issue programming—the kind of work favored by local independent producers—nearly evaporated from the schedule. *Masterpiece Theatre*, African wildlife, and similar bland fare filled the hours. That development, along with spiralling costs for original programs, led Tiano to gradually shrink the station's roster of in-house producers. KQED's last nightly newscast aired in 1980; its last investigative current affairs series, *Express*, expired in 1989.

By the end of the 1980s, KQED was raking in enormous sums from 250,000 members and moving into new $18.7 million headquarters. But all was not sunshine. The local filmmaking community, newspapers, and a rising tide of viewers were growing increasingly critical of KQED's apparent disinterest in the cultural diversity of the Bay Area, not to mention regional issues.

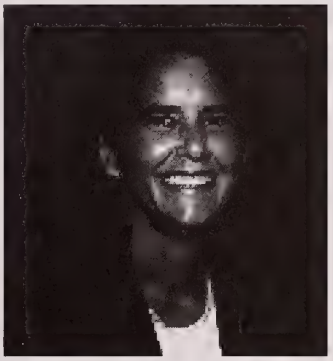
But despite its wealth and size, KQED (unlike WGBH or WNET) had little interest in producing national programming. And while *Focus* generated heaps of cash, many irritated KQED members considered it a misguided use of resources that had nothing to do with the station's mandate. In fact, fully a third of KQED Inc.'s staff in 1990 worked in marketing or administration. As *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Jon Carroll commented about the preponderance of beer festivals and other station-sponsored cash generators, "KQED's getting very adept at fund raising; it's really an art form now. It's like a charity without a disease."

The wheels came off in the early nineties, thanks to a depressed California economy, reduced funding from corporate sponsors, and a membership plateau (due, in part, to the increased penetration of cable television). Along with numerous other cuts, KQED laid off 11 of its 14 current affairs and cultural producers and almost totally phased out station-produced and independent programming.

On another front, KQED was embarrassed by the FCC's decision in 1988 to revoke its license to operate KQEC. After KQED had pulled the plug on KQEC in 1972, it reactivated the station in 1977 only to take it off the air again two years later, ostensibly to repair equipment but actually as a cost-cutting measure. KQEC subsequently resumed broadcasting, but such cavalier management catalyzed a group of Bay Area and outside parties to form the Minority Television Project (MTP) in 1985 to gain control of the station. The African-American alliance succeeded in 1990 when the FCC upheld the original license revocation and, when KQED withdrew its appeal, KMTP began broadcasting on August 31, 1991.

KMTP was underfunded and understaffed from the outset. Six months after it started up, the station went off the air for a day because staffers hadn't been paid. The second black-owned public broadcaster in the country, the station's prime audience—and likeliest members—are also among the region's most economically disadvantaged. As a result, KMTP has repeatedly confronted the possibility of being forced to suspend broadcasting because of lack of capital.

Of equal concern, KMPT has failed two CPB audits, and rumors of improprieties committed by its top two managers at previous public broadcast positions have circulated since the station went on the air. A new entity, the Bay Area Minority Telecommunications Association (BAMTA), recently surfaced to challenge KMTP's license. This coalition of representatives from the African-American and Latino communities purports to represent a broader range of the population, but its prospects for funding are little better than those of KMTP. The next step is inducing the FCC to hold a hearing, which could take as long as two years. The FCC, for its part, is leery of revoking a license in the absence of fraud or mismanagement.



Mary Bitterman, the newly appointed KQED president and CEO.
Photo: Howard Gelman, courtesy KQED

Meanwhile, KQED finally woke up to the public rumblings and the realization that its members provided 62 percent of the station's income. The station initiated a half-hour weeknight talk show, *Q*, that showcased Bay Area artists. Although *Q* was poorly conceived, miscast a stand-up comic as the host, and lasted only a few months, it at least signaled that the station was hearing the hordes outside the gates.

The most encouraging step by far, however, was the *Living Room Festival*, a unique and groundbreaking 13-week series of experimental and independent work curated by Bay Area media groups, which debuted in January 1993. Spearheaded by delegates from the Bay Area Video Coalition, Cinematheque, Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, and National Asian American Telecommunications Arts (NAATA), the series was organized and funded without KQED's assistance. The station provided in-kind services, an 11 p.m. timeslot on Fridays, and some publicity.

"In the first year," says series producer Jack Walsh, "people were trying to challenge, but not outrage." The initial season proved an unqualified success, and the festival even exported 90 minutes of Bay Area-produced work to KCET-Los Angeles. Now midway through its second season, the *Living Room Festival* has lined up its first national funder in the form of a Rockefeller grant. In another development of note, a trio of presenting organizations, Frameline, NAATA, and Cine Acción, pooled and co-curated their three 90-minute slots, coming up with programs on the themes of generations, desire, and hate. The festival is already exploring funding sources for a third season, which will influence discussions with KQED. Both sides, however, have expressed interest in continuing their relationship.

Local independent producers are also pleased with *Viewpoints* and *Docs of the Bay*, two series of nonfiction films curated by Greg Swartz, who took the acquisitions manager position when Pam Porter left the station in 1992. *Viewpoints* airs a blend of local and national works that miss the cut for *P.O.V.*, while *Docs of the Bay* typically pairs two shorter local docs on the same program. By recent standards, this visibility for local filmmakers on KQED is gratifying. Nonetheless, both series pay rock-bottom fees—$20-25/minute—for finished work with no plans on the horizon to fund productions. In addition, KQED typically airs the shows late at night without a regular slot, which works against building an audience.

In addition to KQED's refusal to commission new work—particularly galling given the enormous pool of talented filmmakers in the Bay Area, along with a sophisticated, politically informed population—the station has pared down the number of completion projects for which it provides postproduction services. Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman's *Where Are We: Our Trip Through America* is a recent (albeit two-year-old) example. One of the few films in the pipeline (and several months from completion) is Barbara Sonneborn's *Regret to Inform*, a doc about American and Vietnamese war widows that Pam Porter signed off on before her departure.

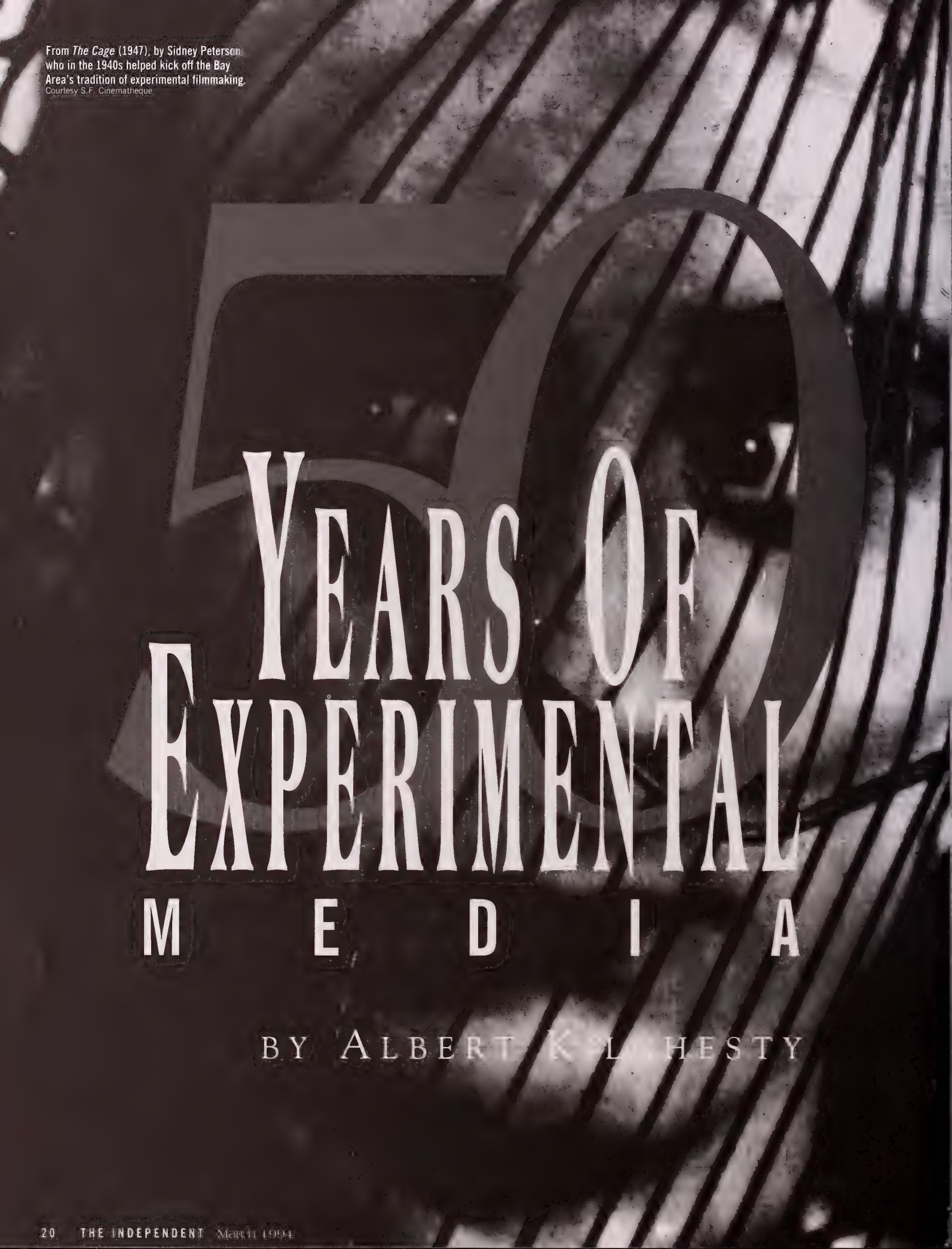
The fact is that programming has decidedly improved in the last two years. The spate of cooking shows (many, like *Yan Can Cook*, produced by KQED and peddled to other PBS affiliates), nature programs, and parched British imports has been alleviated by a recognition of the multicultural Bay Area (which may be a reaction to KMTP's responsiveness to minority audiences). KQED now schedules a bounty of targeted programming during Black History Month (February) and to coincide with the city's annual lesbian and gay pride celebration (June). Even more remarkably, the station invited NAATA to program part of Asian Heritage Month last spring and the Berkeley-based Jewish Film Festival to curate a Sunday evening series of documentaries last October.

Optimists are also encouraged by Tony Tiano's departure in September, 1993, after 15 years, and by the board's choice to succeed him. Mary Bitterman, who supervised a sizable chunk of original programming about Pacific cultures as executive director of the Hawaii Public Broadcasting Authority in the late seventies, was hired over the other finalist—WNET chief operating officer George Miles, who instituted draconian budget cuts and firings at the New York City station three years ago. That's as positive a signal as the Bay Area's independent production community has received from KQED in two decades

So was the letter Bitterman wrote to subscribers shortly after her appointment. "KQED could be a significant contributor to the national schedule with programming that reflects the uniqueness of San Francisco and its rich multicultural traditions," Bitterman stated. "Three stations on the East Coast now produce 60 percent of PBS's national programs. With the Pacific century nearly upon us, I think it's time for the West to play a more important part."

Local independent producers, who've struggled for years without KQED's support, are taking a wait-and-see attitude. Although KQED dollars won't flow into original programming overnight, Bitterman's goals and objectives will gradually become apparent nonetheless. While a return to KQED's glory days of the 1960s is too much to hope for, the local filmmaking community will be elated if KQED merely takes the far-from-radical step of realigning its programming with its viewership.

Michael Fox is a columnist and film critic for SF Weekly *and a freelance writer for several Bay Area publications.*



From *The Cage* (1947), by Sidney Peterson, who in the 1940s helped kick off the Bay Area's tradition of experimental filmmaking.
Courtesy S.F. Cinematheque

50 YEARS OF EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA

BY ALBERT KILHESTY

The San Francisco Bay Area has a long and fabled history as a center for film and video experimentation. Beginning in the post-WWII period and stretching uninterrupted nearly 50 years to the present, the Bay Area has been home to many of America's leading exhibition, education, production, distribution, and advocacy organizations for experimental media. This support system and the natural allure of the region has attracted hundreds of film and video artists to the city and its environs.

Today, the Bay Area boasts the highest per capita population of independent film and video artists in the world. A sample listing of experimental mediamakers associated with San Francisco throughout the years reveals not only an impressive roster of individual talents, but also traces, in miniature, the evolutionary path of experimental media art in the United States. James Broughton, Sidney Peterson, Jordan Belson, Christopher MacLaine, Bruce Conner, Bruce Baillie, Chick Strand, Robert Nelson, Gunvor Nelson, Larry Jordan, Stephen Beck, Chip Lord, Lynn Hershman, George Kuchar, Doug Hall, Barbara Hammer, Tony Labat, Scott Bartlett, Skip Sweeney, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Ernie Gehr, Craig Baldwin, Jeanne Finley, Cecilia Dougherty, Greta Snider, Cauleen Smith, and many others have contributed to San Francisco's grand counter-tradition of nonconventional moving-imagemaking. Whether they call their creations "film-poems," "avant-garde films," "underground films," "expressive documentaries," "video art," or "interactive multimedia," these artists have all made works that are united by a common thread: the use of film and video as tools for personal creative expression.

The Big Bang that started it all occurred in 1946 when the Art in Cinema Series presented the first major public program of fine art cinema in San Francisco. Organized by Frank Stauffacher and Richard Foster at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, this groundbreaking series offered first-time glimpses of films by European avant-garde artists of the 1920s and '30s (Hans Richter, Luis Buñuel, Germaine Dulac, Oskar Fischinger, Fernand Leger) along with films by contemporary American experimentalists (Maya Deren, Douglas Crockwell, John Whitney, and Mary Ellen Bute). On November 1, 1946, Art in Cinema presented Sidney Peterson and James Broughton's *The Potted Psalm*, generally recognized as the first film made by San Francisco artists. The Art in Cinema Series eventually drifted away from experimental films and ended with Stauffacher's death in 1955. During its brief life, however, it stimulated an enormous interest in the artistic possibilities of cinema and triggered a torrent of filmmaking activity among young poets and painters in the Bay Area. In addition to Peterson and Broughton, who each went on to make their own separate films, Harry Smith, Jordan Belson, and Christopher MacLaine were inspired to make films as a direct result of their attending the Art in Cinema shows.



From O No Coronado!, by Craig Baldwin
Courtesy S.F. Cinematheque

In addition to being a gifted film artist, Jordan Belson was largely responsible for keeping film art in the public eye of San Franciscans from 1957 to 1960 with his legendary series of "expanded media" events, the Vortex Concerts at the Morrison Planetarium. Combining a kaleidoscopic array of film and slide projections on the Planetarium's dome with soundtracks of electronic music selected by his collaborator Henry Jacobs, Belson's Vortex Concerts were hugely popular and extremely influential events. The psychedelic light shows presented at rock concerts in San Francisco and elsewhere during the sixties were direct descendants of the Vortex shows.

As more and more artists started making films during the sixties, it became important to provide a venue where the films could be shown publicly on a regular basis as well as an organization that would help make the films available outside the Bay Area. In his backyard in Canyon, California, in 1961, filmmaker Bruce Baillie started showing films made by local artists. These home-spun screenings soon evolved into a "floating cinematheque" that gradually moved to other locations in Berkeley and San Francisco, presenting films to growing audiences in basements, clubs, and storefronts. Baillie's Canyon Cinematheque eventually became the San Francisco Cinematheque, now one of the oldest, continuously operating showcases for experimental, avant-garde cinema in the United States.

In 1966, a group of Bay Area filmmakers banded together to create Canyon Cinema Cooperative, a member-owned collective that allowed anyone to deposit a film for rental and guaranteed all films would be cared for and promoted on an equal basis. The formation of Canyon Cinema ensured that the artistic integrity of members' films would not be compromised or misrepresented by film distribution companies, and that films with "delicate" subject matter would not be refused distribution based on their content. Today, Canyon Cinema distributes almost 4,000 16mm and super 8 titles.

The late sixties also marked the beginning of video experimentation in San Francisco. In 1967 the Center for Experiments in Television was established at San Francisco's public television station KQED, with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation. Under the direction of Brice Howard, the Center, originally conceived as a research and development laboratory for the television industry, encouraged a broad range of artists to experiment with the television medium. Ultimately, it eschewed the creation of corporate product in favor of works that pushed the medium into daring, unexplored territory. Rechristened the National Center for Experiments in Television (NCET) in 1969 after receiving funding from the newly formed National Endowment for the Arts, the Center continued producing innovative video until its close in 1974.

KQED also served as the production and broadcast site for the *Dilexi Series* in 1969, a 12-week series conceived by James Newman, who operated the Dilexi Gallery, and produced by KQED's John Coney. Artists were commissioned to produce new work—with no restrictions on length, form, or content—and were given access to equipment and studio time. This experiment produced innovative tapes and films by Terry Riley, Julian Beck and the Living Theater, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Frank, Walter De Maria, Robert Nelson and William Wiley, and others. Unfortunately, KQED soon quashed such visionary projects. The only truly innovative programming produced by KQED today is *The Living*

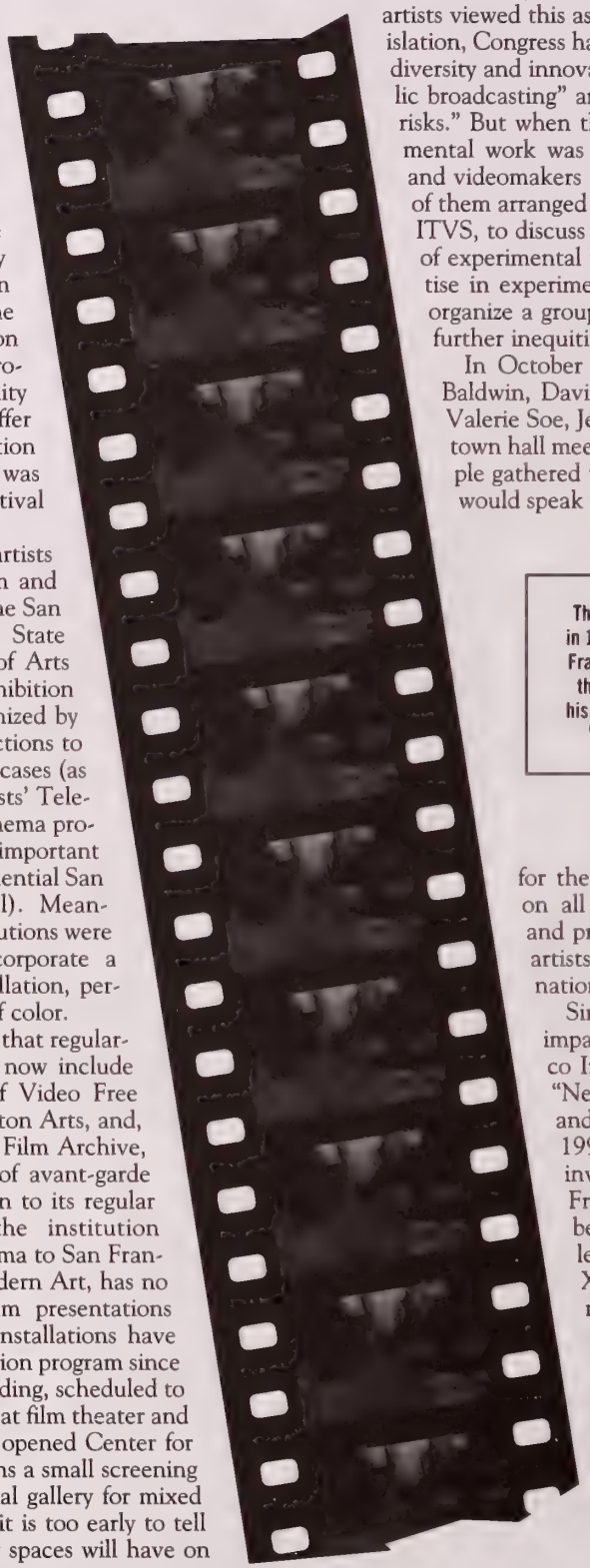
Room Festival, a weekly series featuring films and tapes curated by different Bay Area media groups.

The same do-it-yourself spirit and anti-institutional ethos that fueled grassroots enterprises like Canyon Cinema also created the conditions under which video art could be made and seen outside of traditional studio and broadcast environments. During the late sixties and early seventies, members of the video collectives Ant Farm, Video Free America, and Optic Nerve created a network through which video art could be produced and exhibited in San Francisco. The growing need to democratize the means of video production was shared by many video artists during the 1970s. In San Francisco, this movement led to the formation of the Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC) in 1976, which continues to provide low-cost access to broadcast-quality cameras and editing equipment and to offer instructional classes. Film Arts Foundation (FAF), the filmic equivalent to BAVC, was founded the same year. Its annual film festival prominently features experimental work.

During the 1980s a new generation of artists emerged, many of them products of film and video programs at local schools such as the San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco State University, and the California College of Arts and Crafts. The alternative spaces, exhibition programs, and production facilities organized by these younger artists either began as reactions to the curatorial policies at established showcases (as in the case of No Nothing Cinema, Artists' Television Access (ATA), and the Other Cinema programs at ATA), or were created to fill an important need (like the Video Gallery and the influential San Francisco International Video Festival). Meanwhile, new personnel at established institutions were expanding extant programming to incorporate a broader range of material, such as installation, performance art, and more work by artists of color.

Other San Francisco Bay Area venues that regularly present experimental film and video now include New American Makers (an offshoot of Video Free America), the Exploratorium, New Langton Arts, and, on the other side of the bay, the Pacific Film Archive, which presents two different programs of avant-garde film and video art each week in addition to its regular repertory programming. Ironically, the institution responsible for first bringing fine art cinema to San Francisco, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, has no film screening program at present (film presentations ended there in 1978), although video installations have been important components of its exhibition program since the late eighties. The new SFMoMA building, scheduled to open in January 1995, will house a 350-seat film theater and two large galleries for video. The newly opened Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens contains a small screening room for film and video and has a special gallery for mixed media and video installation. However, it is too early to tell precisely what kind of impact these new spaces will have on the local exhibition scene.

As a mecca for experimentation, the Bay Area has often taken the lead in advocating the interests of noncommercial media. By the mid-1980s, however, it had become clear that many curators, critics, institutions, and funding agencies throughout the country had jettisoned an interest in "difficult" film and video, opting instead to embrace more "audience friendly" material. During this time, experimental media exhibition centers were being systematically defunded, and funding for experimental production was increasingly scarce. As the nineties dawned, the outlook for experimentalists appeared very bleak.



This image of Market Street in 1905, familiar to many San Franciscans, was recycled in the 1960s by Ernie Gehr in his experimental film *Eureka*.
Courtesy S.F. Cinematheque

Therefore, when the newly created Independent Television Service (ITVS) sent out its first call for proposals in 1991, many artists viewed this as a blessing. After all, in its authorizing legislation, Congress had given ITVS the mandate to "expand the diversity and innovativeness of programming available to public broadcasting" and to encourage work that takes "creative risks." But when the list of awards was made public, experimental work was conspicuously absent. Experimental film- and videomakers in the Bay Area were outraged. A number of them arranged to meet with John Schott, then director of ITVS, to discuss their concerns regarding ITVS's exclusion of experimental work and the lack of panelists with expertise in experimental forms. Subsequently they decided to organize a group that would take direct action to prevent further inequities.

In October 1992, an ad hoc group (including Craig Baldwin, David Gerstein, Linda Gibson, Chris Robbins, Valerie Soe, Jeffrey Skoller, and Jack Walsh) convened a town hall meeting in San Francisco, where over 100 people gathered to discuss the formation of a coalition that would speak for the experimental media community. As a result of this meeting, X-Factor was formed. X-Factor is a nonaffiliated coalition of Bay Area film and video artists, curators, and media arts administrators who advocate for the continued support of experimental work on all fronts—funding, exhibition, broadcast—and press for the representation of experimental artists on peer review panels and on the boards of national media lobbying groups.*

Since its inception, X-Factor has had some impact. It successfully lobbied the San Francisco International Film Festival to reinstate the "New Visions" categories for experimental film and video that were eliminated capriciously in 1992. X-Factor members are currently involved in discussions with the new San Francisco library, requesting that media art become part of the library's acquisition, lending, and exhibition programs. Last June, X-Factor received exposure among national media arts organizations at the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture's conference, for which it organized the panel "Experimentation in Film and Video in a Decade of Pragmatism." X-Factor concurrently helped assemble an issue of NAMAC's newsletter, *MAIN*, on the role of experimental media in the nineties. Featuring articles by experimental film and video artists from varying social and aesthetic backgrounds, the issue forcefully illustrated X-Factor's conviction that the needs of experimental mediamakers are not limited solely to Bay Area artists, but are national in scope and urgency.

Albert Kilchesty is the former artistic director of the Los Angeles FILMFORUM. He currently works at the San Francisco Cinematheque.

* For more information on X-Factor, write: Box 411232, San Francisco, CA 94141-1232.

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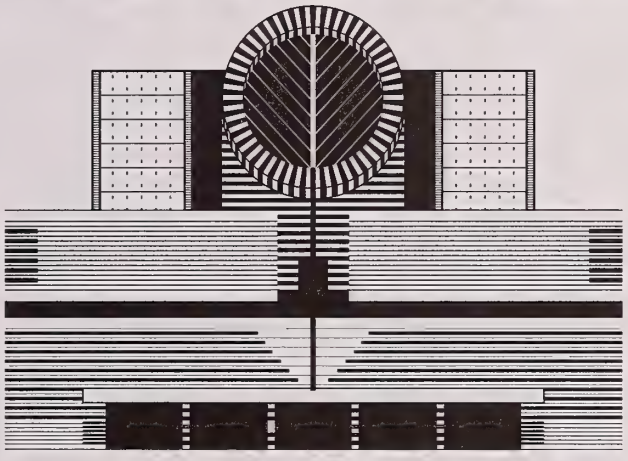
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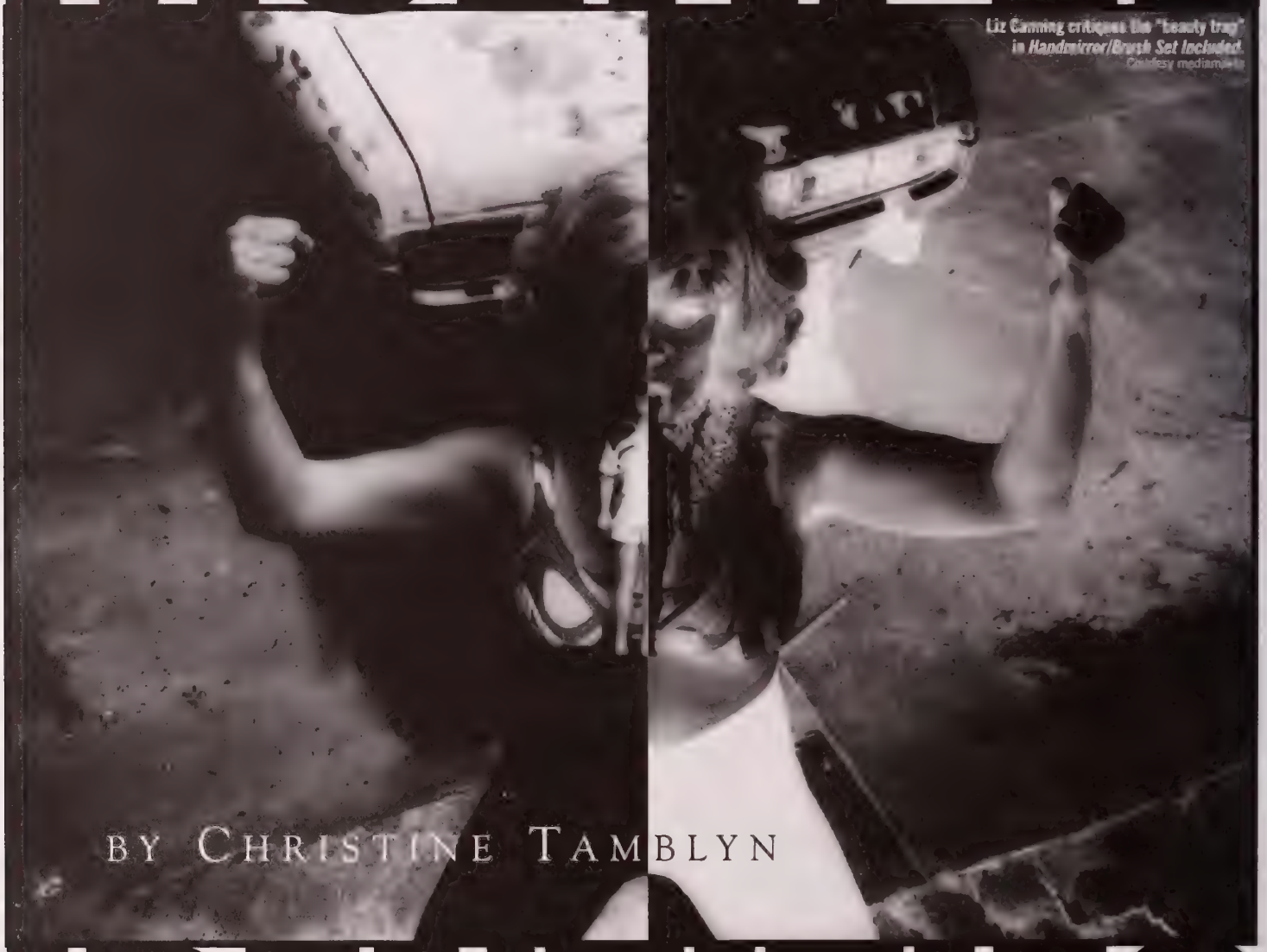
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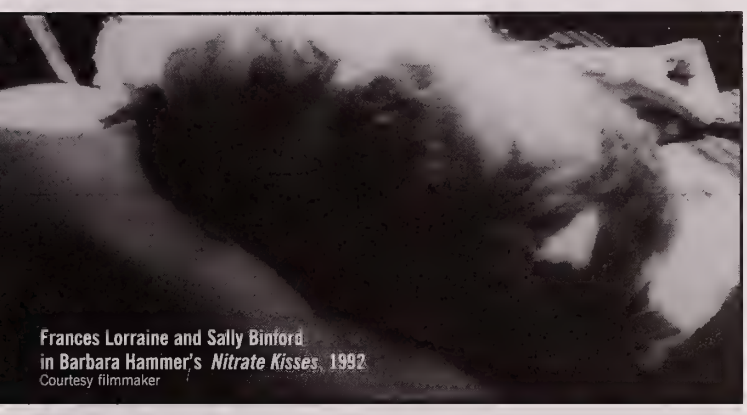
Liz Canning critiques the "beauty trap" in *Handmirror/Brush Set Included*.
Courtesy mediamix

BY CHRISTINE TAMBLYN

Identity politics were the focal point of last year's Whitney Biennial, an exhibition that is traditionally designed to take the pulse of the contemporary art world. In both the Biennial's catalogue essays and subsequently in art journals like *October* and *Artforum*, it was apparent that several interrelated issues concerning the representation of identity were preoccupying artists, curators, and critics alike.

Among the questions raised: Is it still possible to discover a singular, authentic voice through creative expression when identity is theorized as merely a provisional construct, impacted at various moments by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.? If people who belong to marginalized groups make art about the particularities of their experience, are they unwittingly contributing to the commodification of difference by mainstream institutions?

Many recent Bay Area independent films and videotapes also deal with these questions and issues of identity. The preponderance of films and videotapes made by gays, lesbians, and people of color in the Bay Area is not surprising, given the demographics of the region. But another factor affecting independent media production here is the rich history of formal experimentation dating from the avant-garde film scene that flourished in the 1960s. When dealing with



Frances Lorraine and Sally Binford in Barbara Hammer's *Nitrate Kisses*, 1992
Courtesy filmmaker

issues of identity, these mediamakers have invented strategies that resist the polarizing tendencies that have characterized these debates elsewhere.

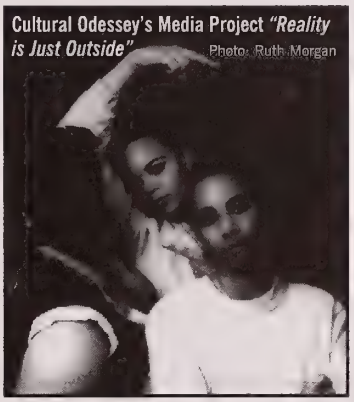
As internationally recognized artists, theorists, and teachers, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Marlon Riggs have exercised a profound influence on the development of identity-based media work in the Bay Area. Trinh's most recent film, *Shoot for the Contents* (1991), reflects on the interface of politics and culture in the Tiananmen Square uprising. As in her previous films, she conflates documentary and fictional modes to interweave the perspectives of insiders and outsiders and to interrogate her own position as translator. *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (No Regret)*, Riggs' 1992 videotape, similarly proceeds from self-interrogation; it considers the dilemma of coming out as an HIV-positive gay man. Five gay African-American men testify to overcoming their fear of disclosing their sero-positive status; the ensuing valuation of their identities is affirmed by the visual strategy of gradually revealing each speaker's physical features.

Working from both experimental and documentary traditions, film- and videomakers like Barbara Hammer, Cecilia Dougherty, Leslie Singer, Lourdes Portillo, and Portia Cobb have produced groundbreaking work that successfully fuses radical form and content. Rather than avoid the rhetorical formats formerly associated with the exploration of identity politics in electronic media, these artists utilize interviews, testimonials, reenactments, and excavated archival footage in innovative ways.

In a recent interview in *Afterimage* about her 1992 film, *Nitrate Kisses*, Hammer stated: "Labelling ourselves is important in the context of identity politics, but at some point those labels have to break apart; they have to contain the gaps, holes, frayed edges as well, or else it's a boring, trapped, ideologically constructed life we live." *Nitrate Kisses* exemplifies this philosophy in its novel editing of gay and lesbian lovemaking scenes with excerpts from Dr. James Sibley Watson and Melville Webber's 1933 experimental film *Lot in Sodom* and voiceover interviews with gay and lesbian couples. Hammer's theme is the reconstruction of lost histories, but she problematizes the process of historical inscription with text fragments that illustrate how language organizes sexuality.

Cecilia Dougherty and Leslie Singer's *Joe-Joe* (1993) exhibits a more irreverent attitude toward history. Although their video is ostensibly a biography of gay British playwright Joe Orton, Orton is portrayed by two lesbians. Not only is his identity bifurcated and his gender altered, but his story is reenacted in present day California rather than in 1960s London. Dougherty and Singer also investigate the construction of fame, showing the process by which a celebrity's identity is ceded to his or her fans within our mass media-obsessed society. By dramatizing their fantasies about Orton, the videomakers graphically convey the superimposition of his persona over theirs. They adopt Orton's trademark leather cap and white T-shirt, but they wear these articles on a holiday in Santa Cruz, not Morocco. Likewise, they have sex in a friend's apartment rather than in a public lavatory.

Joe-Joe's slapstick/slapdash construction conceals a serious ideological agenda: the subversive appropriation of a gay male paragon that counterpoints the appropriation of female attributes by drag queens.



Cultural Odessey's Media Project *"Reality is Just Outside"* Photo: Ruth Morgan

Lourdes Portillo's *Columbus on Trial* (1992) likewise employs subversive humor to articulate a didactic message. The 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to America is commemorated by a critical cross-examination of the conquistador conducted by the Latino comedy group, Culture Clash. Portillo decontextualizes the performers by chroma-keying them into a flat blue electronic space, subtly parodying the recuperation of multicultural iconography under postcolonial corporate capitalism.

The topicality of African-American videomaker Portia Cobbs' *No Justice...No Peace: Black Male IM Mediate* (1992) is crucial to its theme: the numbing effect of the continual repetition on television of the footage of Rodney King's beating. Cobbs counteracts the media's normalization of police brutality by intercutting interviews with black men who describe their experiences of unprovoked police harassment. Cobb's media savvy is also demonstrated by her application of another technique: she re-edits network news footage to create new image and sound juxtapositions that foreground the insidious racial biases of the reportage.

Whereas independent film and videomakers of the 1980s often fetishized cultural theory by directly quoting prominent theorists or illustrating theoretical concepts in an obvious manner, younger artists now take such complex theoretical insights for granted. Their easy familiarity with theory allows them to embody it in their work without explicitly evoking it as a legitimizing factor. Jean Cheng's *Across a Paper Ocean* (1993), Wendy Chien's *Assimilation/ a simulation* (1993), and Liz Canning's *Handmirror/Brush Set Included* (1993) are predicated on concepts of identity as fluid and contingent on fluctuating contexts.

In *Across a Paper Ocean*, Cheng fashions a compelling film portrait of her maternal grandmother while eschewing the authenticating imperatives of a traditional search for roots. Because her now-deceased grandmother never left Taiwan, they never met. Cheng's knowledge of her is derived exclusively from mediated sources: photographs, recordings of Taiwanese music, and family stories. In the film's voiceover narration, Cheng remarks, "Her experiences are written in a language I don't understand."

Chien analogously explores the vagaries of assimilation in her 16mm film, *Assimilation/a simulation*. The title plays on the similar sounds of the words, as well as the ways the processes of "assimilation" and "simulation" reinforce each other. Chien focuses on the emulation of Caucasian stereotypes of beauty by Chinese women. A coaxing English-language lesson tape accompanies shots of women

applying eye makeup, setting their hair, and smoking. As the film progresses, the protagonist begins to realize the political implications of assimilation, with its correlative of internalized racism. Chien also addresses the impossibility of reclaiming a nonhybrid identity. She includes the ruminations of another character who, referring to a photo of Audrey Hepburn, states, "I try to make the best of what I have. I'm not copying anything. We think that look is beautiful."

The tyrannical imposition of idealized standards of beauty by the mass media affects white women as well as women of color. Liz Canning's video *Handmirror/Brush Set Included* is a dizzying video collage of bizarre scraps of found footage, ranging from instructional filmstrips to vintage commercials, pornography, and claymation. The performative provisionality of gender boundaries is apparent in the fragments Canning has scavenged. The protagonist of her experimental narrative vacillates between lesbian and heterosexual role-playing in her struggle to overcome restrictive gender conditioning and become an autonomous individual. Recent tapes by Christiane Robbins (*I.D.*, 1992) and Kathy Brew (*Mixed Messages*, 1990) likewise astutely critique the "beauty trap."

Fresh approaches to feminist concerns also figure in new work by Kathleen Sweeney, Lynne Sachs, and Lynne Kirby. Rather than perpetuating the theoretical split between the identity-as-essence versus social-construction theories, their media work posits ways to combine these two premises. In her video *M/OTHER* (1993), Sweeney utilizes clips from the Hollywood melodramas *Stella Dallas* and *Mildred Pierce* to examine the emotional ambivalence inherent in mother/daughter relationships. One sequence in this densely layered tape consists of a montage of book covers that portray matriarchal goddesses. By depicting goddess worship as mediated by texts, Sweeney acknowledges that essentialist feminism is itself a socially constructed theory. But its consequent provisionality does not preclude its deliberate use to affirm women's power.

Sachs' *The House of Science* (1991) uses optically printed graphics to demonstrate the inscription of gender by the scientific establishment. Her "house of science" is a crude drawing of a house that functions as a travelling matte. Women dance inside it, although their bodies are subjected to medical measurement and regulation techniques. Sachs' voiceover diaries describe her body's division into "the body of the body" and "the body of the mind." Like Sweeney, she seems to realize that female essence does not precede the acquisition of language, but functions as a byproduct of linguistic alienation. Paradoxically, the wholeness Sachs longs for is attainable by writing in her diary, not through a nostalgic return to a lost authenticity.

The formal strategies Lynne Kirby utilizes to investigate questions of gender, race, and class in relation to narrative are innovative and illuminating. Her film *Three Domestic Interiors* (1993) is composed entirely of static shots of people's living rooms. A solitary character enters the shot and a brief interlude of speech or activity occurs. Gradually, the viewer can piece the scenes together to create a story. However, Kirby did not intend the interludes to resolve into a perfect pattern. Abdicating the authoritative narrative voice, Kirby deliberately cedes her mastery to the viewer, leaving her suggestive fragments open to interpretation.

A comparable lack of dogmatism seems to typify Bay Area film and video that deals with identity-related issues. Peter Adair's *Absolutely Positive* (1991) and Mark Huestis' *Sex Is...* (1993) both employ the interview format to explore the significance of sex in gay men's lives. By interviewing individuals of various ages and races, Adair and Huestis refrain from constructing a monolithic or idealized gay HIV-positive subject. Jack Walsh's fan letter/video addressed to Rock Hudson, *Dear Rock* (1993), examines from a personal vantage point the homophobic reactions to the star's AIDS-related death. Walsh recontextualizes clips from Hudson's movies by combining them with a voiceover that conveys his own desire for the actor. The homoerotic subtext Walsh reveals in these Hollywood films resonates poignantly with the attitudes of ignorance and neglect in response to the epidemic he chronicles.

The constant invention of novel approaches to form and content in Bay Area independent media may be partially attributed to the stimulating educational environment provided by universities and art schools in the region. Despite funding problems, San Francisco State University, Stanford University, the San Francisco Art Institute, and California College of Arts and Crafts all sponsor vital programs in film and video production. While researching this article, I viewed several tapes and films by students or recent graduates of these programs that impressed me, both with their relevance to current debates about identity politics and their overall quality.



Hollywood's homoerotic subtext surfaces in Jack Walsh's *Dear Rock*.
Photo: Sid Avery, courtesy filmmaker

Frank Crosby's fictionalized film tribute to his African-American grandmother, *Hunger of Memory* (1993), focuses on her determination to be a writer by mapping voiceover quotations from her journals onto domestic articles from her house. Also questioning the grounding of identity in the home is Marina McDougall's film *If You Lived Here You'd Be Home By Now* (1993). This piece inventories new configurations of public space within a landscape altered by automobile culture and electronic technologies. *La Reina* (1993), by Alfonso Alvarez, features lusciously processed images of the Virgin of Guadalupe, evoking the original significance of representational iconography as an aid to ritual magic.

The proliferation of film and video production in the Bay Area testifies to the commitment of artists and documentarians who consistently contribute their own economic resources toward the completion of their projects. The makers mentioned here are motivated not only by their desire to create aesthetically nuanced work, but also by their need to affirm their identities. The new rhetorical tropes and ideological tactics they have invented to accomplish these aims enhance the efficacy of their work.

Christine Tamblyn is a conceptual artist and media critic who teaches at San Francisco State University's Inter-Arts Center.

The Queen Of Festivals

BY SUSAN GERHARD

June is Mecca-time in San Francisco. The temperature is typically 78 degrees by day, 62 degrees by night, as the brochure for the the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival will tell you.

The festival, an annual event sponsored by Frameline, a nonprofit gay and lesbian media organization, comes at a time of year when strangers travel to the Bay area from all around the world to strip down to muscle T's and dance to Gay Pride Month. Cafés fill, bars overflow, and lines stretch around the block at the festival's home base, the Castro Theater.



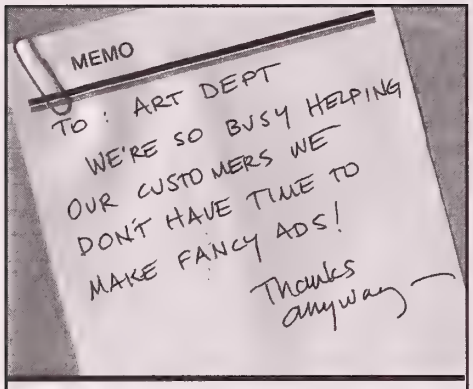
Photo: Handout courtesy Frameline

Last year, this low-budget film-festival-that-roared drew 51,000 viewers, making it the second largest film festival in a region that's awash in them (the Bay Area has about 20 major film festivals—on average, one every third week). The S.F. International Film Festival drew 60,759, the Mill Valley Film Festival 30,000, the Jewish Film Festival 28,000, and National Asian American Telecommunication Art's film festival 7,500. But while a festival like Mill Valley has a budget of $420,000 (with another $420,000 in donations), Frameline's festival budget was a meager $285,000. There are 45 other gay and lesbian film festivals in the world, but even at this budgetary level, Frameline's is still the largest. In its 18th year, it's also the oldest. And it is becoming the most significant for international visibility and sales. Last year, 25 to 30 buyers trekked to the festival.

The trajectory of Frameline's festival over the past 18 years reflects both the growth and increased popularity of gay and lesbian media, as well as the vicissitudes of the larger gay and lesbian community. In 1981, the fifth year of the festival, Dianne Feinstein was the mayor of San Francisco. AIDS was breaking news. The mainstream gay-friendly film *Making Love* was somewhere in the Hollywood production pipeline—and audiences were actually excited by the prospect of its completion. Frameline's five-day festival boasted shows by Arthur Dong, Barbara Hammer, and Terence Davies. Opening night featured a 30-minute documentary (*Greetings from Washington, D.C.* by Lucy Winer) about the first-ever gay March on Washington. Seminal gay film critic/historian Vito Russo performed his clip and commentary show "The Celluloid Closet."

Since then, forces both tragic and catalytic have turned the festival into an event with as many political and social functions as aesthetic ones. In 1985, the festival showed Rob Epstein's *The Times of Harvey Milk*, which had won an Academy Award for documenting the tragedy of San Francisco city commissioner Harvey Milk's murder. In 1988, Frameline put five films on national tour with the Names Project AIDS Quilt. In 1990, Vito Russo died from AIDS. By 1991, younger gay and lesbian mediamakers had come of age under the specter of AIDS and were making works that changed the world's understanding of it.

In 1991, the festival screened *Over Our Dead Bodies*, by Stuart Marshall, on AIDS activism in the U.S. and U.K., as well as Robert Hilferty's *Stop the Church* and Peter Adair's *Absolutely Positive*. Hilferty's film on ACT UP's demonstration against Cardinal O'Connor at St. Patrick's Cathedral was yanked from its slot in *P.O.V.*'s schedule after series executives worried that its confrontational tone would set off a conservative backlash similar to that elicited by Marlon



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Riggs' *Tongues Untied*. That same year the festival was similarly targeted by right-wing media watchers as a source of unwholesome imagery. It was defunded by the National Endowment for the Arts, although Frameline's distribution wing still gets NEA funds.

By 1993, the outlook had changed again. San Francisco lesbian supervisor Roberta Achtenberg was invited to join the Clinton Administration. Miramax had *The Crying Game*, the SF International Film Festival had *Orlando*, HBO had *And the Band Played On*, and, with a more gay-friendly mainstream social climate, the SF International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival had more freedom to expand its agenda.

With that freedom, the festival cast its net across continents. In 1993 guest curator Paul Lee helped highlight the gender-flipping traditions of Asian cinema—as seen in older films like *Black Lizard* (1968, Kinji Fukasaku) and *Funeral Parade of Roses* (1969, Toshio Matsumoto)—as well as appreciate gay identity politics in East Asian nations. The festival screened Hong Kong commercial film *The East Is Red*, *The Wedding Banquet*, a Taiwanese film by New York resident Ang Lee, which moved on to broader distribution, and the Thai cross-dressing documentary *Ladyboys*, among others.

Although the festival is its most visible activity, Frameline offers distribution and consulting services which, all combined, make this small, nonprofit organization an extremely influential part of the gay and lesbian media world. At its inception in 1981, distribution was a labor of necessity. Back then, there was no other regular source for lesbian and gay film. Frameline decided to start renting works to keep difficult-to-obtain foreign films by indepen-



Irma Acten's *Belle* was screened at last year's San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, which drew over 50,000 viewers.
Courtesy Frameline

dent gay and lesbian makers in the country, according to former festival director Michael Lumpkin in an interview with Golden Gate University graduate student Lauri Tanner. Now it distributes 160 titles, from Gus Van Sant's *Mala Noche* to Marlon Riggs' *Tongues Untied*, sending them out to schools, colleges, theaters, and community groups.

In its home in the Film Arts Foundation building South of Market, it's both clearinghouse and resource center. "Basically, we get a million phone calls from all over the world: people wanting films or advice about how to put on a festival," explained archivist and festival codirector Jenni Olson. Last year, Olson received calls from TriStar and HBO. They were looking for activist footage for *Philadelphia* and *And the Band Played On*. Gus Van Sant needed some lesbian porn footage for *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*. When the archival hotline's not abuzz, Olson is giving advice to other festivals, like New York's Mix and New Festival, and Los Angeles' International Gay and Lesbian Film and Video Festival.

The First Gay Erotic Film Awards in 1993, cosponsored by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, turned community outreach up a notch. Local filmmakers were encouraged to create safe-sex porn films during the year—Frameline, Falcon Studios (a local porn studio), and the AIDS Foundation sponsored workshops—and the winners of the contest were screened to a standing-room-only crowd at the Castro's 1,550-seat theater. Year-round at the Eye Gallery in San Francisco, Frameline screens films, and it also cosponsors screenings with other festivals.

Much as programmers in San Francisco would like to see themselves at a big film potluck when it comes to sharing ("We all want what's best for the *film*," Laura Thielen from the SF International Film Festival explains, echoing the sentiments of Janice Plotkin at the Jewish Film Festival and Frameline's exhibitions and festival director Mark Finch), the process of deciding who gets what often looks more like a tug-of-war.

This year, NAATA got first dibs on Arthur Dong's eagerly awaited *Coming Out Under Fire*, a film about gays in the military. Although the film doesn't have any particular Asian focus, and it doesn't interview Asian Americans, it's made by Dong, an Asian American director based in Los Angeles—a director whose work NAATA has shown from the beginning. Frameline is going to cosponsor the film on NAATA's closing night.

Last year, the S.F. International Film Festival lost Christine Parker's *Forbidden Love* to Frameline's festival after Thielen had been following the film for months. The filmmakers, distributors, and programmers decided it would be in the film's best interest, since Frameline was

intending to play this documentary about lesbian pulp novels on opening night. But the SF International Festival gave Sally Potter's gender-bender-through-time epic *Orlando* high profile, giving it the Satyajit Ray award.

Although Frameline and the S.F. International Film Festival have worked out their struggles, the premiere policy these festivals follow (films must be Bay Area premieres) makes them difficult festival neighbors. (Frameline's festival falls close on the heels of the S.F. International Film Festival, which is held in late April through early May.) "When you have a premiere policy, you put the festival above the film," Paul Mayeda Berges, NAATA's festival director, says. "You put filmmakers in position to make a false choice. And fewer people see the films."

"To ask why *Orlando* is not in the [Frameline] festival misses a point," Finch counters. "*Orlando* is possible because of the range of images in this festival. We're here to show work that would otherwise not be seen." The difference between Frameline's festival and others in San Francisco is not simply a difference of budgets, staff, outreach, or intent. It's in cinema history and in the relationship between lesbians and gays and the medium itself.

"Unlike ethnicity," Finch explains, "sexual orientation is obviously more difficult to perceive in real life. Lesbians and gays need to represent themselves visually to know who 'we' are." If you look at the history of this imaging—from the work of Andy Warhol and Jack Smith to Todd Haynes and Su Friedrich—you also see a history of the boundaries of film. Besides working inside the Hollywood industry, "passing", and/or subverting more mainstream films, gays and lesbians have often worked in the margins of film, experimenting with form.

While the festival has always shown a range of programs, from historically important directors like Dorothy Arzner to S.F.-based pornographers like Blush Entertainment, the S.F. Lesbian and Gay International Film Festival has also had a tradition of promoting experimental envelope-pushers, like Derek Jarman and Barbara Hammer. Films that other festivals (and the NEA) consider pornographic, obscene, or unfit for viewing, Frameline has considered its bread and butter.

As a result, corporate sponsors and foundations have shied away from funding this festival for years. (It receives much less sponsorship than other festivals its size.) But the current staff doesn't want to mess with the successful community-based, experimentally focused formula. "We can't change too much," Finch says. "It's like an ecosystem; it would throw the whole thing off. We want to be the most progressive, as well as the biggest, oldest, and most exciting gay and lesbian film festival in the world."

Susan Gerhard is a film critic for the SF Bay Guardian *and a videomaker who lives in San Francisco. Her work has appeared in* Visions, Future Sex, GirlJock, Planet Girl, *and other publications.*

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Held in April; call for deadlines.

The organization is currently undergoing review of its exhibition & competition schedules. Contact for updates: BFHFI, 405 14th St., ste. 515, Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 465-0804.

CINEQUEST, THE SAN JOSE FILM FESTIVAL

Held late October, deadline early August.

Fest focuses on American "maverick filmmaking," w/ add'l complements of int'l ind. films, seminars, "film feast" evenings & children's programs.

Cinequest, Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172-0040; (408) 995-6305.

EAST BAY VIDEO FESTIVAL

Held late November, deadline mid-October

Estab. 1980 in Berkeley to provide video & television technologies access & training for East Bay communities.

East Bay Video Festival, 2054 University Ave., ste. 203, Berkeley, CA 94704; (510) 843-3699.

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL

Held early November; deadline late July.

Sponsored by Film Arts Foundation, fest highlights locally produced Bay Area works in all lengths, formats & genres.

Film Arts Foundation, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., SF, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

HUMBOLDT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Held April, deadline February (video) & March 11 (film).

This 27-year-old fest, held in northern CA, is organized & presented by students from Humboldt State Univ.; works in all genres by students & independents eligible.

Humboldt International Film Festival, Theatre Arts Dept., Humboldt State Univ., Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-4113.

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

Held late July; call for deadlines.

Jewish Film Festival was created in 1981 to showcase contemporary films from around world on Jewish subjects & to strengthen awareness of Jewish secular culture.

Jewish Film Festival, 2600 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710; (510) 548- 0556.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL AND VIDEOFEST

Held early October, deadline late June.

Invitational noncompetitive fest dedicated to US & int'l ind. film/video; held north of SF.

Mill Valley Film Festival & Videofest, 38 Miller Ave., ste. 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

Held mid-May, competition deadline early December; market deadline early April.

Founded in 1970, leading US fest/market for educational media & largest West Coast venue for nonfiction work.

NEFVF, 655 13th St., Oakland, CA 94612-1222; (510) 465-6885; fax: 465-2835.

POETRY FILM AND VIDEOPOEM FESTIVAL

Held mid-late November; call for deadlines.

Int'l competitive fest founded in 1975 by Poetry Film Workshop; focuses on works incorporating verbal poetic statement.

Poetry Film/Video Festival, Fort Mason Center, Building "D", SF, CA 94123; (415) 776-6602.

SAN FRANCISCO ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Held early March, deadline mid-October.

National Asian American Telecommunications Arts presents this annual showcase of film & video by/about Asian-Pacific & Asian-Pacific Americans.

NAATA, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., SF, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Held late April - early May; call for deadlines.

Begun in 1957, SFIFF is Western Hemisphere's oldest film fest. Films incl. in noncompetitive program by invitation only, but fest also offers Golden Gate Awards, int'l competition w/ 32 cats.

SF Film Society, 1521 Eddy St., SF, CA 94115-4102; (415) 567-4641.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL

Held mid-June, deadline end of February.

SFIL&GFF/ Frameline, 346 Ninth St., SF, CA 94103; (415) 703-8650.

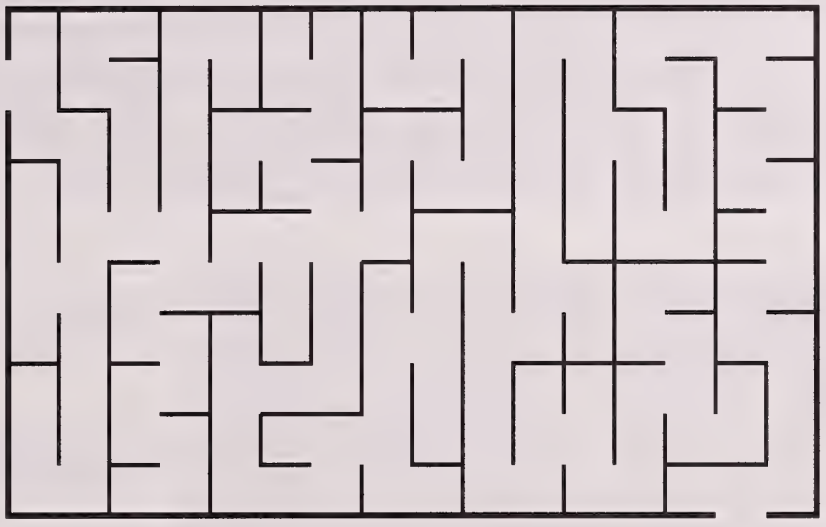
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- ***PCTV GLOBAL AFRICA INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL*** **Peralta Colleges Television, Laney College, 900 Fallon St., Oakland, CA 94709; (510) 464-3253.**
- ***SACRAMENTO GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL,*** **2214 Arden Way, ste. 138, Sacramento, CA 95825; (916) 489-6397 or 863-3497.**
- ***SAN FRANCISCO IRISH FILM FESTIVAL*** **World Trade Center of SF, ste. 280, SF, CA 94111; (415) 392-1109.**
- ***SAN FRANCISCO ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL*** **The Institute for Food & Development Policy/Food First, 398 60th St., Oakland, CA 94618; (510) 654-4400.**
- ***SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY-VISUAL ARTISTS ANNUAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL*** **Associated Students Program Board, Student Union Room 350, San Jose, CA 95192-0132; (408) 924-6264 or 6261.**
- ***SHORT ATTENTION SPAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL*** **Artists' Television Access, 992 Valencia St., SF, CA 94110; (415) 824-3890.**

COMPILED BY LAURI TANNER

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craig baldwin
NO-BUDGET VISIONARY


Photo: Greta Snider

BY CHUCK STEPHENS

There's a great story in today's paper," exclaims Craig Baldwin in his highly excitable mode of address. Words and ideas spill over one another in a nonstop ticker-tape rattle as he rifles through a stack of newspapers. "Here it is: 'Germany Used Cadavers To Test Their Cars.' Well, I can identify with that! I like to experiment on films, to make the work that much more charged or powerful; you know, cutting up images from the past, having fun with them, and pulling their ironies out."

Baldwin is not being morbid or glib; he's searching for the appropriate carnival barker's metaphor to describe his no-budget visionary approach to film. A self-described "media savage," Baldwin—as a collector and purveyor of junked film scraps; as a found-footage filmmaker (*Wild Gunman*, 1978; *RocketKitKongoKit*, 1985; *Tribulation 99: Alien Anomalies Under America*, 1991; *O No Coronado!*, 1992); and as programmer of the willfully eclectic Other Cinema series at San Francisco's Artists' Television Access—is as likely to yank ideas from obscure headlines as he is to draw momentum from Northern California's long tradition of media pranksterism.

Baldwin, a California native, is perhaps best known for the found-footage diatribe *Tribulation 99*, a hilarious, tabloid-style paranoiac's rant with an aggressive montage that fuses Japanese monster flicks and Encyclopedia Britannica educational-industrial films into a whirlwind of pseudo-political speculation. Cattle mutilations and Latin American communism are "shown" to have resulted from an invasion of mind-controlling mutants operating from the Earth's hollow interior, and comic substitutions abound: Lon Chaney's Wolfman, for example, stands in for Manuel Noriega.

"I've always approached filmmaking from the point of view of political satire, like Lenny Bruce, to name one titan," says Baldwin. "The idea of dark comedy in my work isn't about resolving problems so much as opening up a space to problematize the issue and throw people into disarray."

Baldwin began collecting found footage while working in a variety of porno and mainstream movie theaters in the 1970s. "It was always just lying around, but it was very degraded—films on the floor, thrown away—and it forced me to develop a very existential relationship with film in the real world. And I think that fostered my attraction to the film qualities of stress, degradation, and wear. When I started making films, I found that I wasn't so much interested in creating new and very expensive images, but in rescuing and reanimating film cast-offs. I used every available resource to get them: I'd dumpster dive at TV stations or buy them from other collectors. Labs would give me their rejects and seconds, and I'd rummage

around in the backs of movie theaters. I collect a lot of junk anyway—it's the nature of my personality."

A longtime programmer at alternative filmspaces, Baldwin for the past several years has shared his workspace with Artists Television Access, a multi-disciplinary media arts center in the Mission District. The Other Cinema series he runs out of the ATA on Saturday nights furthers Baldwin's collision-aesthetic: you're as likely to find *Nanook of the North* as early Sally Potter, recent Sadie Benning, or a historical lecture on the evolution of Godzilla.

"When I started Other Cinema, I did three shows a week: The Rad, The Mad, and The Bad. The Rad was the more political thing, documentary stuff; The Mad were fine art works and artists' visions; and The Bad was the exploitation or schlock cinema, which I have an abiding interest in. It was this kind of Oedipal triangle that really shows you the drive and the neurosis behind my method."

Last year, Baldwin completed *O No Coronado!*, a delirious meditation on the Spanish conquistadors' hellbent search for the Seven Cities of Gold. The film is full of purposefully cheesy "historical recreations."

"It's like Frank Capra's *Why We Fight*: a little bit essay, little bit narrative, little bit newsreel, plus archival, industrial, animation, and even some Video Toaster special effects," Baldwin explains. "That film's saying, 'Hey, I may be a completely strapped low-budget filmmaker, but I can manage to express this idea in a kind of weird cinematic shorthand, and at about 1/1,000th of the budget of *Cabeza de Vaca!*"

Currently Baldwin is at work on a film about digital sampling technology, the corporate control of culture, and the Fair Use provision of copyright law. "What's happening in the margins of our media-saturated world with people like Negativeland [an experimental music group that used samples of a song by U2 and was consequently sued by U2's parent company, Warner Bros.] is that they're picking up on the possibilities of new technologies and using them to talk back to mainstream culture in a good faith way," Baldwin says. "That's the whole definition of parody and satire that's written into the Fair Use law: to redeem critical activity as something healthy and salubrious for the culture. There's a formal symmetry between what Negativeland is doing and what I'm doing: using pieces of expropriated film." Baldwin pauses for a moment; then his prankster's smirk returns. "I'll tell you one thing: It won't be fairhanded, it won't indulge in this mythic idea of objectivity or balance. That's for sure!"

CHUCK STEPHENS

Chuck Stephens writes about film and visual media for the San Francisco Bay Guardian.

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john knoop
FILMMAKER/CINEMATOGRAPHER

BY LISSA GIBBS

John Knoop's 30-year career as a cinematographer, producer, and director is an inspiring example of one man's dedication to his creative and philosophical viewpoints and his belief in the expressive potential of film and video. Having worked exclusively out of the same South of Market loft since 1968, Knoop embodies a thumbnail history of Bay Area alternative film, from its early Canyon Cinema days to its current status as a center of social and political documentary.


Photo: Elizabeth Farnsworth, courtesy filmmaker

Known primarily as a documentarian, Knoop has made more than 15 films and videos of his own and estimates having shot nearly 100 works with upwards of 30 directors since picking up a motion-picture camera in 1964. He has worked on such recently acclaimed films as Susana Muñoz and Erica Marcus' *My Home, My Prison* (1992), about Palestinian journalist Raymonda Tawil's pioneering role in establishing an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue for peace; Camino Films' *Maria's Story* (1990), an intimate portrait of FMLN leader Maria Serrano in El Salvador; and Knoop's own *Report from Iraq* (1991), which documents the findings of a group of lawyers, doctors, and students who travelled to Iraq immediately after the Gulf War to assess the damage. Since 1990 Knoop has also worked as a codirector (with Elizabeth Farnsworth) and as a cinematographer for the *MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour* on reports from Vietnam, Cambodia, Peru, Panama, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

But Knoop is not just another camera-guy commando tempting fate in the name of documentary journalism. His seasoned and thoughtful approach toward his subjects and the overall context of a piece demonstrate an instinctive ability to communicate and establish basic human bonds. The resulting work is often a mixture of historical document and personal reflection. His most recent film, about a rafting expedition through Central Asia, is a far cry from the standard outdoor adventure film. *River Out of Time* (1993) concentrates instead on the subtle cross-cultural encounters between indigenous peoples and outsiders and how their different cultures, histories, and customs overlap at common junctures. The film's low-key, almost nonchalant unfolding gives the piece an eloquent sense of the quotidian, in much the same way Knoop's work in more hostile shooting situations reflects an immediacy. "Basically, I try to get close to people who can express what the situation is," Knoop explains. "The emotions of such situations are often so strong, so clear, that I really do disappear, and the event speaks for itself."

Originally from the Midwest, Knoop's only formal schooling was a brief stint at New York's Columbia University studying literature. After an extended journey by motorcycle through Central and South America and a three-year residency in Spain working as a writer, Knoop returned to the United States in the early 1960s and was hired as a journalist for a Midwestern agricultural publication, *The Farm Quarterly*. Still photography, then later cinematogra-



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phy, became a means for Knoop to illustrate his articles. Shortly after becoming the Western editor of the publication—a move that brought him to San Francisco—Knoop forfeited his seniority, benefits, and bonuses in exchange for the publication's 16mm film equipment. About that time, he ran into a former high school classmate-turned-filmmaker, Robert Charlton, at a "Human Be-In" at Golden Gate Park and began a collaboration with Charlton on a never-completed film about the Haight-Ashbury scene. (Much of that footage ended up in Mark Kitchell's 1990 film *Berkeley in the Sixties*.)

"My path to independent film was in part a reaction to the constraints of popular journalism," Knoop recalls. "I was interested in pursuing film as a new language of light and motion—a language akin to the dream state, that space between storytelling and painting and theater." After receiving a few grants for some experimental documentary work (notable among his early films are *Farm*, 1968; *Dune*, 1974; *World's Fastest Hippie*, 1974; and *Shadow Master*, 1982), Knoop began working primarily as a cinematographer on what could broadly be described as portrait films. Included among these are Les Blank's *Sworn to the Drum*, Terry Zwigoff's *Louie Bluie*, Kim Shelton's *Cowboy Poets* and *The Highly Exalted*, George Csicsery's *Where the Heart Roams* and *"N" is a Number*, and Nancy Kelly's *Cowgirls*.

"I've been very fortunate to work with many of these directors, not only because of who they are and how they work, but because their films were films that I wouldn't have minded making myself. Indeed, I feel incredibly lucky. As the cinematographer, I get to do more—see more and work more—than if these were my own films, without having to actually fundraise." Asked about the logistics of working with other directors, Knoop admits, "Well, it can be difficult at times, but I try to keep my own ego at a fairly low profile—a Zen exercise to be sure!"

As to future projects, Knoop continues to seek out work that draws him to all corners of the globe. He also has a book of memoirs, *Kaleidoscope*, due out soon, which he describes as "an attempt to retrieve and re-examine fragments lost in the process of documentary filmmaking."

"Some people might say that I'm a 'leftist' filmmaker, but I'm far less interested in those labels than in simply being myself. I'm definitely drawn to situations that involve the larger questions of 'the game'—matters of life and death—as they relate to the lives of real people, but I'm not on any sort of crusade," Knoop says. "I've found that what is interesting to me in life and work is the journey, the process, and not necessarily the destination."

LISSA GIBBS

Lissa Gibbs is a Bay Area-based writer, curator, and educator. Most recently she directed the ninth annual Film Arts Festival.

lynne sachs
EXPERIMENTAL FILMMAKER

BY SUSAN GERHARD



lynne Sachs calls her latest film, *Which Way Is East?*, a "work-in-process." She uses the phrase to describe three of her experimental documentaries that evolve over time. This particular one started as a road trip and flowered into a political discourse. It's a half-hour travel diary of her trip to Vietnam—a collection of tourism, city life, culture clash, and historic inquiry that's put together with the warmth of a quilt.

That warmth is no accident. For Sachs, film is folk art. Pieces are crafted much as they're conceptualized. Her work is hands-on everything, from the film itself to the machines she reshapes it on. "I was welding electronics on this machine one hour ago," Sachs notes casually as we settle in to watch *Which Way Is East?* on a portable six-plate flatbed. She later describes the optical printer—the machine she uses to double-expose and linger over particular frames—like it's a family heirloom. "An optical printer is sort of from that era of the sewing machine. You hear every single stitch."

Sachs sees film as a mutable thing, as her phrase "film-in-process" indicates. She's turned two of her films into installations: *The House of Science: A Museum of False Facts* (1991), in which she torches a doll house and the anti-feminist myths contained inside it, metamorphosed into a three-dimensional exhibit at Artists' Television Access in 1991. And work-in-process *Stories of UnBelonging* turned up as an installation in 1992 at Buffalo's Hallwalls Center for the Arts.

Photo: Robert Gumpert, courtesy filmmaker

Like most of Sachs' films, *Which Way Is East?* is personal. In 1992 Sachs slipped her Bolex camera into her backpack and went to visit her sister in Vietnam. There she shot 40 minutes of film, much of it a few frames at a time out the window of a room where, due to illness, she was confined to her bed. When she returned to the United States, she put together a 30-minute film that combines Vietnamese parables, history, and memories of the Vietnamese people she met, as well as her own childhood memories of the TV war.

In the film, Sachs recalls visiting Vietnam's Museum of War Atrocities. While standing in the American Wing, she looks across the street and notices that another part of the museum is closed. Her sister explains that Vietnam's relations with China are good, so there are no visiting hours for viewing China's war atrocities.

To Americans for whom "Vietnam" ended in 1975, *Which Way Is East?* is a reminder that Vietnam is a country, not a war. The film has a combination of qualities

that make Sachs well admired among Bay Area experimental filmmakers: compassion, acute observational skills, an understanding of history's scope, and a critical ability to discern what's missing from the textbooks and TV news.

A 1979 graduate of Brown University, Sachs traded her history degree for a Bolex camera. She moved to San Francisco in 1985, got a Masters in Cinema from San Francisco State, and earned an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute. Since then, she's worked her way from office temp and sound technician to filmmaker and lecturer, and has exhibited in festivals ranging from Atlanta to Oberhausen.

Which Way Is East? continues a practice she began with her 1989 project, *Sermons and Sacred Pictures*. This half-hour film depicts the life of Reverend L.O. Taylor, a Memphis preacher and filmmaker who, in the 1920s, gave witness to the idea that film, as a medium of self-representation, could affect people. He made and exhibited films of his congregations' baptisms and daily lives.

"[Taylor] preserved something; [he used] that relationship of being an artist to bring something back to the place," says Sachs, who has a similar modus operandi. She showed Taylor's films to a congregation in San Francisco when she was collecting sounds from the church for *Sermons and Sacred Pictures*. The churchgoers recognized scenes from Taylor's film: aunts, uncles, places. It brought their South back to them.

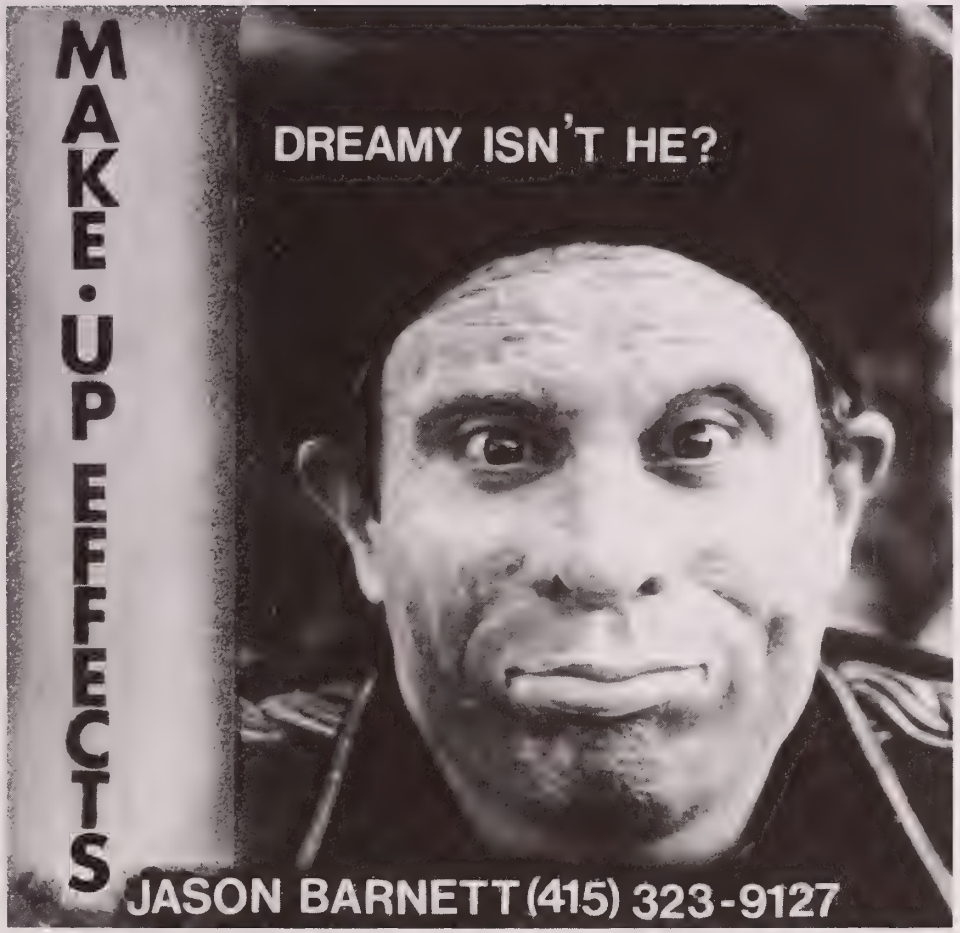
Making *Which Way Is East?*, she made another connection—this time across continents. Sachs asked a number of Vietnamese Americans to help her decipher parables and read the stories she gathered from conversations in Vietnam for the film's narration. In the process, many recognized their own stories. Sometimes, Sachs gets a personal invitation to dinner when the day's work is done.

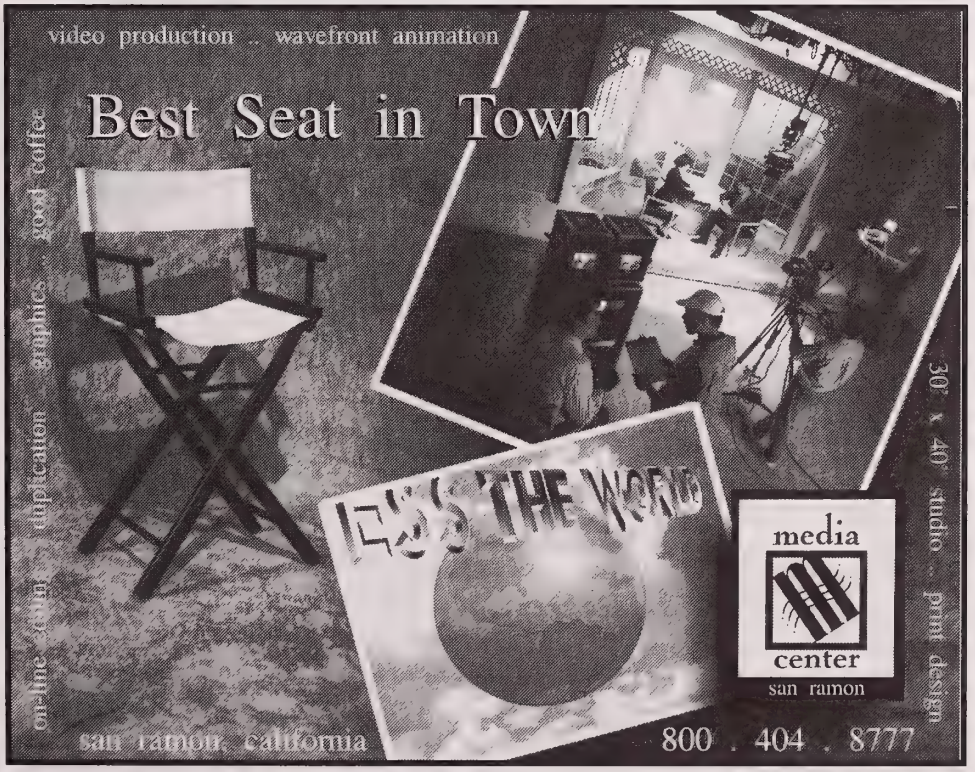
Sachs' populism is not a hobby. In her daily double-life, she's a teacher. She's constantly impressed by the visions and skills of first-time film- and videomakers in her courses at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland. She's also pleased to be able to watch her favorite films (works by former San Franciscan Bruce Conner, for one) again and again—and get paid for it. But it's in the six months between teaching gigs when the real work gets done; when she descends into her studio and concentrates, uninterrupted, on her film craft.

"I like the term 'filmmaker,'" she told the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, "because it's like the word homemaker." Sachs has reinvented that word in the same way she reinvents film.

SUSAN GERHARD

Susan Gerhard is a film critic for the SF Bay Guardian.





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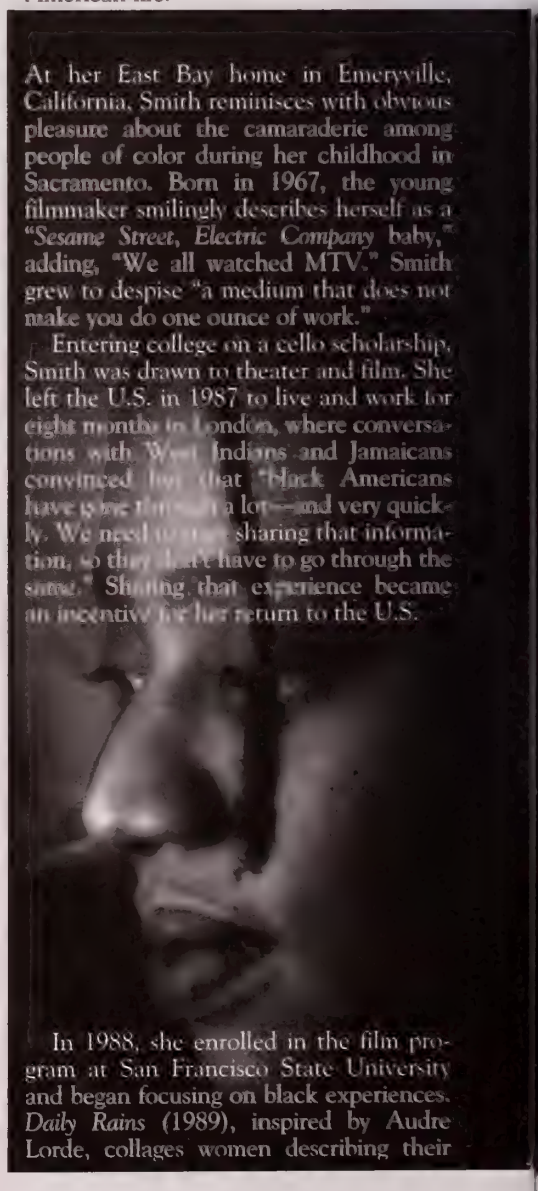
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cauleen smith

BY LINDA GIBSON

hree women confront memories of racism. A black man gazes nervously through a window. Family and found photographs construct an autobiography. These haunting images typify Cauleen Smith's films on African-American life.



At her East Bay home in Emeryville, California, Smith reminisces with obvious pleasure about the camaraderie among people of color during her childhood in Sacramento. Born in 1967, the young filmmaker smilingly describes herself as a "*Sesame Street, Electric Company* baby," adding, "We all watched MTV." Smith grew to despise "a medium that does not make you do one ounce of work."

Entering college on a cello scholarship, Smith was drawn to theater and film. She left the U.S. in 1987 to live and work for eight months in London, where conversations with West Indians and Jamaicans convinced her that "Black Americans have given [racism] a lot—and very quickly. We need to start sharing that information, so that [we] don't have to go through the same." Sharing that experience became an incentive for her return to the U.S.

In 1988, she enrolled in the film program at San Francisco State University and began focusing on black experiences. *Daily Rains* (1989), inspired by Audre Lorde, collages women describing their

first encounters with racism during small, everyday events. These narratives accompany shots of children's outdoor games and women walking amidst projected photographs. *Daily Rains*, is an expression of Smith's philosophy that "even though I talk about race, I talk about it as a woman." In this first film, she established not only a principal theme, but also her filmic style, which uses gestural language; repetition as a structural element; evocative layering of texts and voices; and a deliberate hand-crafted look.

Emphasizing oral narrative, Smith sees herself in the griot tradition. She shows obvious discomfort with the term "experimental," which is more often used to characterize her work. "I'm not trying to challenge form just to do it," she insists. "I'm trying to use the form to desimplify, reunite, and rewrite things." During her school days at San Francisco State, she saw the potential of the experimental genre in artists like Philip Malory Jones and Jean-Luc Godard. *Breathless* "made me feel powerful, as if I were in control of what I was seeing—just like the maker and I were having a dialogue." Other experimental styles, however, make her uncomfortable. "There's the whole vanguard of experimental filmmakers who were doing amazing things, but... a lot of the work was alienating. If I make any of this for my people, they're going to hate it," she chuckles. "We're already marginalized, so why marginalize myself any more than I have to? Especially when I'm doing this because I want to communicate, not alienate."

The tension between form and meaning is played out against stereotypes of African Americans in *Chronicles of a Lying Spirit* (1992). Two voices—a white man and Smith—simultaneously narrate two versions of the artist's life. One compiles contemporary stereotypes, while the other resists them to find power in art. Our interpretation of family and archival photographs (eating watermelon, dancing in African dress), overlaid with text and manipulated, shifts as the stories grow and recede.

The Message (1993), a study of male sensuality from a woman's perspective, incorporates Smith's acute awareness of her power as a creator of black images. While the camera explores a bare-chested man, his cigarette smoke and the light glancing off a beer glass add to the evocative play on the senses. The soundtrack interweaves a love letter, Smith's directions to the man and her concerns about how the images will be understood. Smith, narrating the voiceover, wonders, "Is this the way I want to gaze on this black man?" while focusing our attention on the sensual qualities through her dynamic editing.

"John Sayles... has the luxury of putting [blacks] in his films... in a colorblind manner. You and I have to take it very seriously, every representation that we do. And it can become suffocating," she said pensively. "But I don't mind that, it becomes part of the process." Smith's films have screened at such traditional venues as AMMI, Sundance, and the London Film Festival. But the black viewer remains her priority and she seeks out community audiences in hip-hop clubs, neighborhood cultural events, and discussion groups.

After musing about her experiences with alternative exhibition and self-distribution, Smith admits that she must look for the energy needed to sustain this "long, hard road." At age 26, Cauleen Smith has already become an important contributor to African- American and experimental film.

LINDA GIBSON

Linda Gibson is a video artist, curator, arts administrator, and educator who writes occasionally on media arts and independent media in education.



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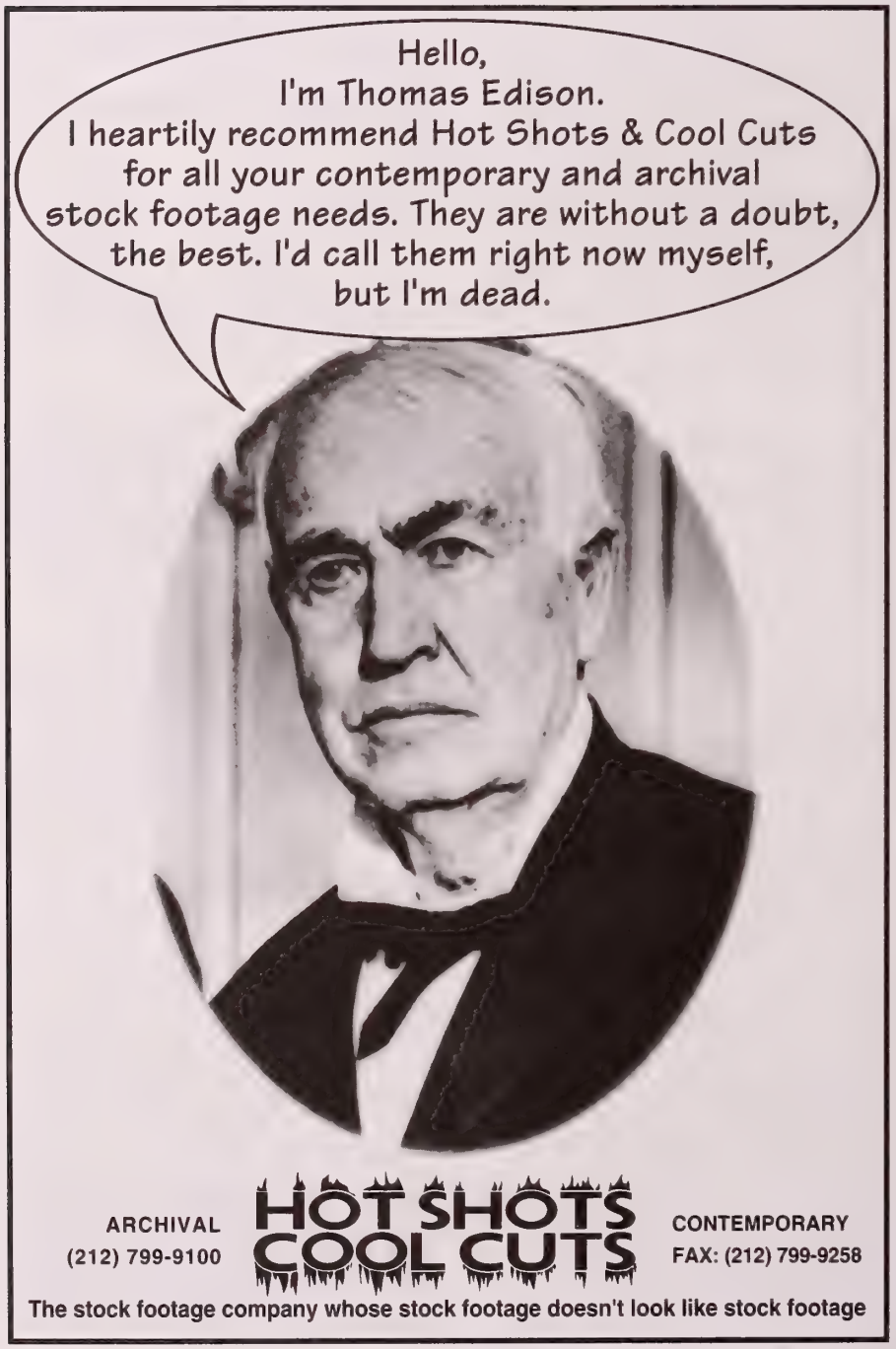
BY HEATHER MACKEY

I wasn't musically inclined," Valerie Soe says, trying to explain the fateful processes at work on her during her days in the Los Angeles punk scene of the early 1980s. "Not that that you had to be musically inclined.... But people were becoming skinheads or surf punks, and they weren't that politically oriented. So I got tired of hanging out with these people who just wanted to beat each other over the head with their spiked bracelets. I decided to try something else, and that's where video came in."

Ten years later, Soe has received fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Western States Regional Media Arts Council, and Film Arts Foundation, and her videos have won prizes at festivals around the world. But she's still the proud upholder of a high-impact, low-tech aesthetic that she says was shaped by punk's do-it-yourself ethic and the fact that the art department at UCLA, where she began making videos, had really bad cameras. "That was good," she says. "That got me away from trying to make television."

Instead, Soe turned her camera on herself and on the issues that concerned her as a young Asian American woman living in Los Angeles in the first years of the Reagan Administration. She, the punk rockers, and the radical, politicized Asian American student groups Soe was involved with were "pissed off." She discovered that video's attributes (its immediacy, low cost, and low-gloss factor) dovetailed perfectly with her own artistic goals. "With video, I found I could talk about the political and social issues that I wanted to talk about anyway without having to put it in a narrative structure with characters and actors running around," she says. "I never learned how to do that, and I don't know if I ever will."

Soe's work treads the line between autobi-



ography and witty cultural probing. Whether it's the effects of interracial dating (*Mixed Blood*, 1992), media images of Asian women (*Picturing Oriental Girls: A (Re) Educational Videotape*, 1992), or the "Model Minority" stereotype of Asians (*Black Sheep*, 1990), Soe unpretentiously maps the rocky terrain of identity and assimilation. In *All Orientals Look the Same* (1986), a deceptively simple one-and-a-half-minute piece, lays waste to a laughable cliché. Her next project is about her mother's family in Phoenix, Arizona, a Chinese American family who lives in the desert. The men wear bolo ties, her grandmother hand-makes tortillas, and her mother heats tamales in a rice cooker. "I like the idea of this weird cross-cultural hybrid that has nothing to do with mainstream America," she says.


Photo: I.H. Kuniyuki, courtesy videomaker

Her work often starts as autobiography: "When you're an artist, you get to complain about your problems," she jokes. But her videos have a much broader agenda than personal confession. "I'm not going to talk about my hangnail or something, unless it has some value as a metaphor," she says. "But using the autobiographical stuff is really a good hook to get people interested. It's like [there's] this gossipy gene in people. Then you can talk about sexism and racism and the isms, and serious deep things without sounding like a lecture."

In her own words, Soe is no "theory queen," although her tapes make nimble use of experimental traditions and are grounded in the tenets of postmodernism. Soe also writes art criticism for *High Performance*, *Afterimage*, and other journals. More than any allegiance to theory, Soe remains faithful to her own gut reactions. "Bugged" by white male pursuit of Asian women and, at the same time, curious about her own feelings toward having a white boyfriend, Soe made *Mixed Blood* and showed it as a multichannel gallery installation where viewers could input their own responses to the piece. "Last year I tried to make a decision that I wouldn't talk about myself so much anymore," she says. "I wanted to see what other people thought—that's why *Mixed Blood* is all other people talking."

For Soe, San Francisco is the one place where she truly feels at home. Just back from a teaching stint in Santa Barbara, she is relieved to return to the Mission District, a section of the city where cheap Mexican food, low-rent art spaces, an exciting amalgam of ethnicities, and San Francisco's best weather have conspired to create a thriving new bohemia. It is, she says, a great place for independents. "There's no way you're going to make Hollywood movies up here, so nobody tries... There's a community that's built up here, for whatever reason, and it's really supportive."

That community spirit is reflected by X Factor, a local organization of experimental artists dedicated to supporting the work that slips past the gaze of mainstream funding agencies. "There's like this complete ghettoization of experimental work, as if it's just a stepping stone to something else," she says vehemently, "And that just really annoys me. That's all just because of the tyranny of Hollywood." But that doesn't mean Soe believes experimental media artists should be stuck laboring in a garret.

"It's like Nirvana says: 'Corporate rock still sucks.' But if they're going to give you money, you should definitely take it and turn it into something good or subversive," she says. "There are different ways to bring about change in this society, and they're not always by standing outside and screaming as loud as you can. Sometimes you can get yourself into the boardroom and set it on fire."

HEATHER MACKEY

Heather Mackey is a contributing editor to SF Weekly.

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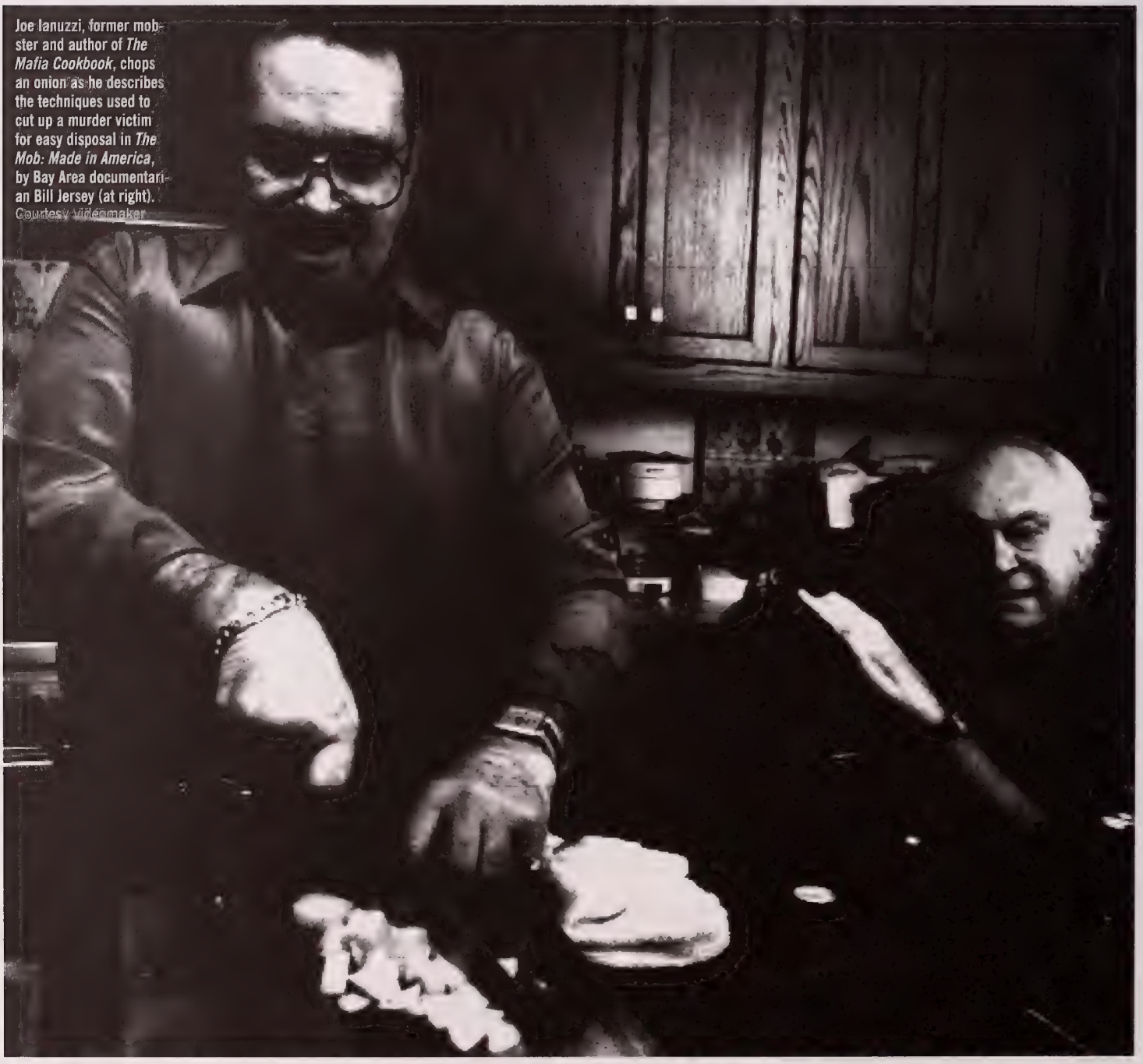
By Mitch Albert & Michele Shapiro

Cruel statistics abound, and, as usual too little attnetion is paid to them. In **Satya: A Prayer for the Enemy** (27 min., Hi8-to-16mm), Ellen Bruno sheds some much-needed light on the continuing tragedy of Tibet. More than one million people there have been tortured, executed, or starved to death for demonstrating against the Chinese forces that have occupied the region since 1950. Tibetan Buddhist nuns have taken the lead in this resistance by fearlessly staging demonstrations for independence. Countless among them have received brutal treatment for shouting slogans; criticizing the Chinese state in conversations with foreigners; possessing independence posters; or hoisting the Tibetan flag. Yet the nuns strictly adhere to a code of nonviolent resistance. *Satya* focuses on the testimonies of these Tibetan nuns, seeking to understand the basis of their nonviolent principles. In so doing the film provides a rare opportunity to hear specific instances of religious oppression and human rights abuses by China. *Satya: A Prayer for the Enemy*, Film Library, 22-D Hollywood Ave., Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423; (800) 343-5540 (domestic distributor); Ellen Bruno, 163 Fairmount St., San Francisco, CA 94131; (415) 641-4491; fax: 641-9104 (domestic & int'l television sales).

Are the kids alright? Dayna Goldfine and Dan Geller look into the matter in **Frosh: Nine Months in a Freshman Dorm** (93 min., video to 16mm). Set in a coed, multicultural dorm at Stanford University, this documentary tracks the lives of 10 students within a community of 80 freshmen from widely divergent ethnic, economic, geographic, religious, and philosophical backgrounds. The filmmakers lived among their subjects from move-in day through spring finals. **Frosh** is currently in use on over 200 campuses.

Also from the same team, and currently in postproduction, is **Tim & the Kids.** This feature-length doc observes the workings of the controversial Art and Knowledge Workshop, run by artist Tim Rollins in the South Bronx. Rollins aims to develop the minds and spirits of the kids in his charge through literature-based art making. *Frosh*, California Newsreel (nontheatrical),149 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 621-6196 or Geller/Goldfine Productions (theatrical), 1677 11th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94122; (415) 661-6723.

Donald and Shotwell are officers on duty in an underground missile silo. Each has orders to shoot the other if he behaves "strangely." Unsure if they are being tested or if something



Joe Ianuzzi, former mobster and author of *The Mafia Cookbook*, chops an onion as he describes the techniques used to cut up a murder victim for easy disposal in *The Mob: Made in America*, by Bay Area documentarian Bill Jersey (at right). Courtesy videomaker

has gone wrong, they watch the consoles and contemplate a shooting or a launch. When Shotwell introduces a little game to relieve the tedium, Donald begins to wonder: "What is *strange*?" Based on a short story by Donald Barthelme and produced/directed by brothers Rob and Rod Myers, this is ***game*** (18 min., 16mm).

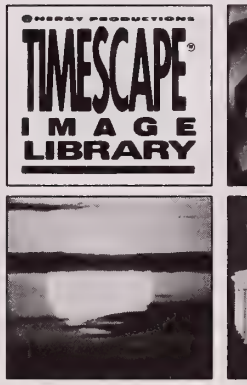
The Myers brothers are currently in preproduction for a half-hour film, **Out There**, a story of sisters reunited after a 15-year estrangement. *game* and *Out There*, Rob and Rod Myers, Cine22, 972 Westlynn Way #4, Cupertino, CA 95014-5857; (408) 725-1260.

For Quest Productions and producer/director Bill Jersey, 1992 and 1993 were banner years, marked by the national broadcast of more than 10 hours of programming. Now, with both **The Mob: Made in America** (240 min., Beta) a doc for Fox Broadcasting that takes viewers inside the world of organized crime to unravel the history of the mob in America, and **First Edition** (30 min., Beta), a half-hour series for PBS on books and authors currently in production, plus a special and two more series in development, 1994 promises to be an even bigger year. Future projects currently in development at Quest include: **Hail to the Chief: the Making of the American Presidency**, a four-part series for PBS and **Power and the Press**, a second four-part series for PBS that will provide an inside look at the reporting and marketing of news. Quest Productions, 2600 Tenth St., Berkeley, CA 94710-2522; (510) 548-0854.

Angela D. Chou's social commentary on Chinese American women, **red white blue and yellow** (13 min.,16mm) will debut this spring at various film festivals worldwide. The film mixes ethnic and racist recollections with the typical conversation one would expect from a homogenized American woman. Fragmented framing stresses marginalization in a "white" society. *red white blue and yellow*, Angela D. Chou (415) 252-8762.

Les Blank has been keeping busy. His production company, Les Blank's Flower Films, has a number of projects in the works, including **Green Warriors** (16mm), which explores Earth First! and other groups who take radical measures to save the planet; **Sworn to the Drum** (16mm), a documentary "three-quarters finished" on Afro-Cuban conga drummer Francisco Aguabella; and **The Maestro: King of the Cowboy Artists** (16mm), a portrait of one California artist who follows the principle of living his art rather than selling it. Both *Green Warriors* and *The Maestro* are in progress pending completion funding. Contact Les Blank's Flower Films, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530; (510) 525-0942.

Debra Chasnoff is currently involved in projects large and small. She has the rights to the Karen Thompson/Sharon Kowalski story—the landmark gay and disability rights case—and is developing it into a dramatic feature with recent Emmy winner Jane Anderson. She is also producing and directing a multi-part media project on preventing homophobia among elementary school-aged children. The project begins with a documentary about how children learn homophobia and examines how schools can intervene in that process. It also includes three videos for young children about family diversity, name-calling, and dispelling



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stereotypes. The yet-untitled project is now in preproduction. Debra Chasnoff, 2017 Mission St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 252-1344.

Barbara Hammer's **Tender Buttons** (16mm), a feature on lesbian autobiography that uses personal archive footage, educational documentaries, dramatic vignettes, and computer movies, is scheduled for completion in winter 1994. *Tender Buttons*, Barbara Hammer, Making Her Visible Prods, 872 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 641-7595 (ph./fax).



In and Out of Africa **investigates the Western relationships to African art and African art merchants. Trader Gabai Baare (pictured) worked with documentarians Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Taylor on the video.**
Courtesy videomakers

A would-be expatriate journeys to northern Spain and discovers the impossibility of leaving America behind. Filmmaker Jacob Bricca's meditation on tourism, mass culture, and authenticity, **Escape from America** (34 min., 3/4" video), takes a restless look at the frightening aspects of globalized culture. The film was completed last summer. *Escape From America*, Jacob Bricca, GBH Pictures, 2328 Santa Catalina, Palo Alto, CA 94303; (415) 858-1155.

Although **In and Out of Africa** (59 min., 3/4" video) begins conventionally enough—with trader Gabai Baare negotiating for art objects in Africa—it quickly takes an unexpected turn. Rather than focusing on African art, it demonstrates how a given object, depending on its cultural context, can mean different things to various individuals. Filmmakers Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Taylor show that Western desires to own African art are often predicated by colonialist nostalgia, and when the same colonialism is depicted by Africans in their art, it is often denigrated by Western "experts" as not being sufficiently "profound." The video is distributed by UC Media Extension.

Taylor and Barbash are now in Martinique working on their next documentaries, one on the rum industry and another on the stay of Albert Dreyfus in French Guiana. *In and Out of Africa*, Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Taylor (through April 30, 1994), chez Price, Anse Chaudiére, Anses d'Artlet 97217, Martinique, French Antilles; (596) 68 67 67 (ph./fax).

The Academy Award-winning team of Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman is back in production with **The Celluloid Closet** (35mm), a

film based upon the highly acclaimed book by film historian and AIDS activist Vito Russo. The film will examine the representation of gays and lesbians in films throughout motion picture history. Funds for the project have been provided by Channel Four (UK), Germany's and France's ZDF-Arte, and PBS, among numerous other sources. *The Celluloid Closet*, Telling Pictures, 347 Dolores St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 864-6714; fax: 864-4364.

The Aroma of Enchantment (55 min.; video), a video essay by Chip Lord, investigates the idea of America for various Japanese people. Lord weaves historical stories about General Douglas MacArthur and his own feelings of alienation in the midst of Japanese culture with stories told by collectors or practitioners of Americanization. Each person interviewed connects his or her concept of America to the postwar occupation period. Produced, directed, and edited by Chip Lord from footage shot during a Creative Artist's Fellowship in Japan during 1991. The video will be screened at the Japan Society in New York on March 25. *The Aroma of Enchantment*, Video Data Bank, 37 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 345-3550.

Subtitled "A Love Story for the 90s," Lynn Hershman's **Virtual Love** (73 min.,16mm, Beta, VHS) is a cyberspatial tale of obsessions and illusions. Valerie, a shy archivist in a virtual reality tech lab, transmits love notes accompanied by images to the computer screen of Barry, a researcher working for the same company. When he demands a real-life encounter, Valerie panics, resulting in "virtual death." The narrative is sectioned in five, each introduced by real-life experts in media and virtual reality. Hershman, a film and video artist since 1980, wrote, directed, and edited.*Virtual Love*, Lynn Hershman (415) 567-6180 (ph./fax).

Jon Moritsugu is in postproduction on the feature **Mod Fuck Explosion** (70 min., 16mm), a no-budget film shot in San Francisco last year. Moritsugu also completed **Terminal USA** (57 mins., 16mm) for ITVS' *TV Families* series. It has been screened at the Toronto and Rotterdam fests and will be exhibited soon at the Pompidou Center in Paris. *Mod Fuck Explosion*, Jon Moritsugu, 495 14th Ave #2, San Francisco, CA 94118; (415) 386-0731.

Directed and produced by AIVF member Lisanne Skyler, **Black Owned** (60 min., 16mm) focuses on the ABC Loan Company, a South Central Los Angeles pawn shop/cheque-casher. The recently completed documentary uses the pawn shop as a metaphor both for economic and spiritual survival. With the objective of breaking down media-reinforced stereotypes, *Black Owned* weaves footage of the pawn shop together with portraits of people caught up in the monthly cycle of cashing their welfare and payroll cheques and pawning items to tide them over until the next cheque. *Black Owned*, Lisanne Skyler (415) 474-2651.

Jonathan Goldin has completed a documentary titled **Wandering Jews, Dreams of California and Zion** (60 min., Beta). Goldin describes the project as "a personal as well as artistic project, born of my own quest and turmoil." His main goal in travelling to Israel six times was to find former American Jews, primarily those born after the Holocaust, who had made the transformation from American to



From Lisanne Skyler's *Black Owned*.
Courtesy filmmaker

Israeli. Those interviewed include Yossi Klein Haveli, a reporter at the *Jerusalem Report*, and Ze'ev Chafetz, former press spokesman for Menachem Begin. *Wandering Jews, Dreams of California and Zion*, American Chutzpa Productions, Saul Zaentz Fantasy Film Bldg., 2600 Tenth St., Berkeley, CA 94710; (510) 883-9060; fax: 486-2115.

Red Sky Films begins principal photography this month on its first feature film, **Farmer & Chase**. Written & directed by Michael Seitzman, the film, billed as a "thinking person's action movie," will feature Bay area musicians Bob Weir, the Jerry Garcia Band, and Clarence Clemons. Bob Humphreys serves as exec. producer, while Michael Maley is cinematographer & Tony Saunders composed the score. *Farmer & Chase*, Michelle Goodman, Red Sky Films, 50 Green St., San Francisco, CA 94111; (415) 421-7332; fax: 0927.

Crimes of Compassion and Revolutionary Acts is the second doc in a three-part series about abortion. Director/coproducer Dorothy Fadiman and coproducer and editor Daniel Meyers began the series with the Oscar-nominated *When Abortion Was Illegal: Untold Stories*. The series will conclude with *Unsafe Abortion: A Global Perspective*, a look at challenges to reproductive rights and the human toll of unsafe abortion throughout the world. *Crimes*, to be released this spring, tells stories of people who risked arrest to provide safe illegal services, as well as others who fought to change restrictive abortion laws in the U.S. before *Roe v. Wade* made abortion legal throughout the country. The documentary, which combines interviews and rare archival footage, is being produced in association with PBS station KTEH-TV, San Jose, and is sponsored by Film Arts Foundation. *Crimes of Compassion & Revolutionary Acts*, Concentric Media, 1070 Colby Ave.; Menlo Park, CA 94025; (415) 321-1533; fax: (415) 321-5633.

Family Cirkus (10 min., Beta), by Jeffrey and Stephane Forte-Orgill, combines experimental, narrative, and documentary styles. The video examines domestic violence through personal oral narratives and social factors including sexism, homophobia, and media representations of violence. The filmmakers, who received a grant from Film Arts Foundation, hope to distribute the video as a counselling tool for mens' and womens' groups dealing with violence. *Family Cirkus*, Jeffrey and Stephane Forte-Orgill (415) 552-8399.

Since profiled in the May 1993 issue of *The Independent*, Gary Rhine's Kifaru Productions has encountered the best and worst of times. **Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations** (60

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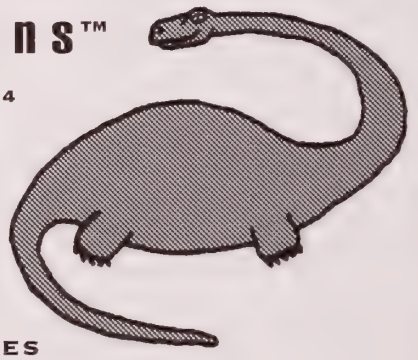
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min., 3/4" video to 16mm) has aired on the Disney Channel. But **The Peyote Road** (59 min., 3/4" video to 16mm), which received the 1993 Best Documentary award at the Great Plains Film Festival, has been turned down by TV and cable broadcasters, including PBS. Rhine believes the negative response is due to the controversial nature of the program, which concerns religious freedom. Kifaru is also in postproduction on **The Red Road to Sobriety** (60 min., 3/4" video to 16mm), which documents the flourishing movement across Indian country that incorporates indigenous traditional ceremonies into the alcohol recovery process. Kifaru Productions, 1550 California St., ste. 275, San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 673-5004; fax: 381-6246.

Production began in November 1993 on **Not Once But Twice** (90 min., 16mm), a suspenseful drama scripted and directed by Craig Garcia and Dale Hall, Jr. (both of whom are under 30 years of age). The story centers on a young San Francisco law student who becomes entangled in an underworld of crime and deception. *Not Once But Twice*, Christopher M. Quigley, executive producer, 1075 Old County Road, Belmont, CA 94002; (415) 595-4922.

In the feature, **Naked Beneath the Water** (80 min., VHS), murder passes for entertainment when a reality-based series airs home videos of serial killers. A young man sees his missing brother sliced and diced one night and goes to the scene of the crime to look for clues. Writer and director Sean Cain has been fascinated with the favorable response to shows including *Cops* and *I Witness Video*. By making the film, he wanted to explore the relationship between the viewer and the sensationalized victim. Production was completed in February 1993 and will air on the channel 53 program *Tolerance* every other Sat. at 3 p.m. *Naked Beneath the Water*, Sean Cain, 1852 Elkwood Dr., Concord, CA 94154.

"The title," says Steven Okazaki of his new film, **Rising Sons**, "is a response to Philip Kaufman's *Rising Sun*, which I found extremely offensive. It is a poisonous insult to all Asian Americans." Okazaki, an Academy Award-winning independent producer, hopes to "puncture the model minority myth" with this film, currently in postproduction. It features six actors performing dramatic pieces drawn from real-life interviews with Asian Americans, with special emphasis on the impact of racism in their lives.

On the lighter side, Okazaki has also completed a romantic comedy, **The Lisa Theory**, about three men dealing with the demise of their recent relationships. *Rising Sons* and *The Lisa Theory*, Farallon Films, 548 Fifth St., San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 495-3934; fax: 777-5633.

Art piece. Documentary. Experimental. Music video. All these terms describe Rodrigo Betancur's **Autodescubrimiento: 1492-1992** (70 min.; video). The video opens with footage of the Dineh people's homeland in Big Mountain, Arizona. The first half of the video tells the story of the Americas over the past 500 years through the voices of Isabel Allende, Noam Chomsky, and others. Also featured: a reenactment of Columbus' landing at Aquatic Park. *Autodescubrimiento*, New Breed Productions, 2973 24th St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 824-6112.

By Kathryn Bowser

1994 DIRECTOR FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU

THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER, DIRECTOR OF THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME DETAILS CHANGE FASTER THAN WE DO, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PRINTS OR TAPES.

Domestic

BRAZEN IMAGES: WOMEN IN FILM, July 22-25, TX. Formerly Third Wave International Women's Film & Video Festival, this fest, presented by Women's Media Project, will continue to offer mix of best & most recent films & videos by women from throughout world. Name change reflects "programming that challenges concepts of what it means to be woman... Selected works speak boldly & honestly for themselves." 2 sections: invitational event, for which fest will solicit & preview works during several mos. & Regional Showcase, juried competition open to women directors from TX & surrounding states (Deadline: May 30). Fest held at Dobie Theatre in Austin. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Contact: Claudia Sperber, fest dir., or Jana Birchum, regional showcase coordinator, Brazen Images, c/o Women's Media Project, Box 49432, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 473-2766; fax: 472-1043.

EARTHPEACE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-10, VT. Fest is competitive forum for films & videos that address issues of global concern in cats of: Justice & Human Rights; Issues of War & Peace; Environment (Re-emerging Nationalism, Racism, Children, Business & Environment). Fest also accepts out-of-competition entries of PSAs & music videos. In 1993, 95 films/videos from 17 countries were presented, w/ approximately 45 filmmakers in attendance; academic courses are offered at several local colleges in conjunction w/ fest. Since 1990, EarthPeace has had relationship w/ Hiroshima Int'l Film Fest. Awards: Best of Fest, Best of Cat (Environment, War & Peace, Justice & Human Rights); City of Burlington; People's Choice; Positive Solutions to Global Problems; Heart of Fest (for film that exemplifies interconnectedness between fest themes); InterNetwork Foundation (given by foundation from Netherlands to film that best deals w/ issues of world's children at risk). Winning films considered for nat'l & int'l touring program, which incl. Hiroshima & Ambiente-Incontri Int'l Film Fest on Nature & Environment in Sacile, Italy. Prods must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1993 & not have received any nat'l US network/cable TV or theatrical distribution prior to fest. Entry fees: $35, up to 19 mins; $45, 20-39 mins; $55, 40-59 mins; $1/min., over 90 min. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, Hi8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: EarthPeace Int'l Film Fest, c/o Burlington City Arts, City Hall, Burlington, VT 05401; (802) 660-2600; fax: 658-3311.

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, May 28-June 6, FL. Invitational expo of film, held at Enzian Theatre, focuses on film as art. Showcases 20 artists & invites int'l entries in animation (experimental, computer, traditional), doc, avant-garde & experimental cats. Shorts programmed w/ features. Incl. awards, galas, seminars, showcases. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video (computer animation only); preview on 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Mark Mullen, Florida Film Fest, Enzian Theatre, 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32751; (407) 629-188; fax: 6870.

LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 7-17, CA. Presented by Gay & Lesbian Media Coalition, fest programs film & videos by &/or about lesbians, gays, bisexuals & transgenders. Features, shorts, docs, experimental & animated works accepted. Entry fees: $20, features over 60 min.; $15, 30-60 min.; $10, under 30 min. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: GLMC, 8228 Sunset Blvd., ste. 308, W. Hollywood, CA 90046; (213) 650-5133; fax: 2226.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA MARKET, May 18-20, CA. 8th yr of leading int'l market for nontheatrical & educational film, video & multimedia programs. Market brings together producers, developers, distributors, publishers & broadcasters. Distributors, publishers & broadcasters sell to educational, institutional, broadcast & consumer markets worldwide. Films, videos, interactive media & works-in-progress accepted. Market will take place at Oakland Convention Center as part of National Educational Film & Video Festival. Entry fees: $60 per entry; $30 for prods already entered in NEFVF competition. Deadline: Apr. 8 (late submissions accepted until Apr. 29 w/ $20 late fee.) Contact: Kate Sphor, media market director, National Educational Media Market, 655 Thirteenth St., Oakland, CA 94612-1220; (510) 465-6885; fax: 2835.

ONION CITY EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, May, IL. Sponsored by Experimental Film Coalition, fest is "committed to excellence in exhibition of all vital forms of experimental film." Also provides info & access for the community & general public. Entries must have been completed after Mar. 1, 1992. All genres of experimental film accepted. Entry fees: $20 members/students; $25 nonmembers. Formats: 16mm, S-8; preview on original, 3/4", 1/2" (membership drive special: $30 entry & membership). Deadline: Apr. 11. Contact: Johnny White, OCFF dir., 1467 S. Michigan Ave., 3rd fl., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 986-1823.

SINKING CREEK FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 8-13, TN. In 1984, Sinking Creek, oldest Southern film fest, will celebrate 25th anniversary. 3-person jury awards $8,000-$10,000 in prizes. Cats: doc, experimental, animation, dramatic. Fest offers special presentations by important mediamakers & seminars in film analysis. Program incl. area premieres, children's matinees & midnight screenings. Held on Vanderbilt Univ. campus, which has 350-seat cinema, meeting rooms, lounges & art gallery. Entry fees: $25-60, depending upon length. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; prescreening on 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Meryl Truett, exec. dir., Sinking Creek Film/Video Fest, 402 Sarratt Student Center, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37240; (615) 322-4234; fax: 343-8081.

TOURING INTERNATIONAL MUSIC VIDEO FESTIVAL, Summer, IL. This exhibition is devoted to "art of music video." Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1993. Cash awards. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Carolyn Faber, Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division St., Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 384-5533.

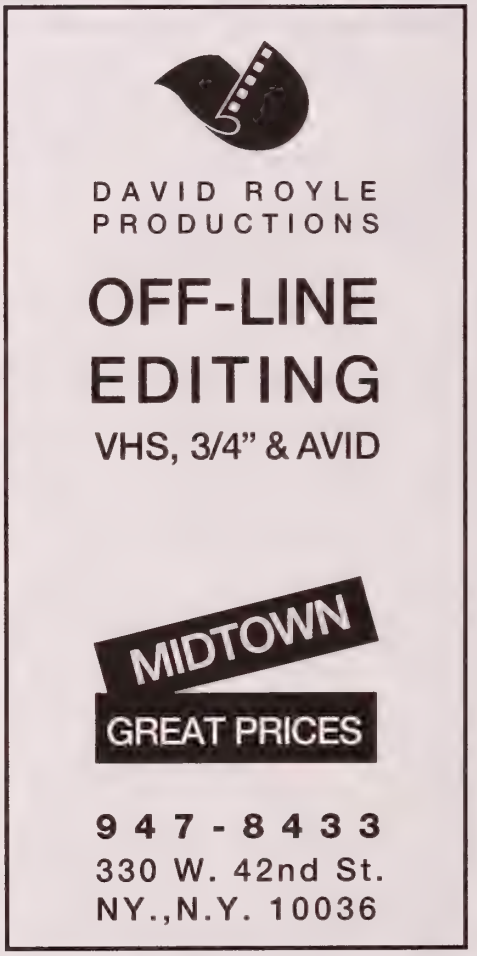
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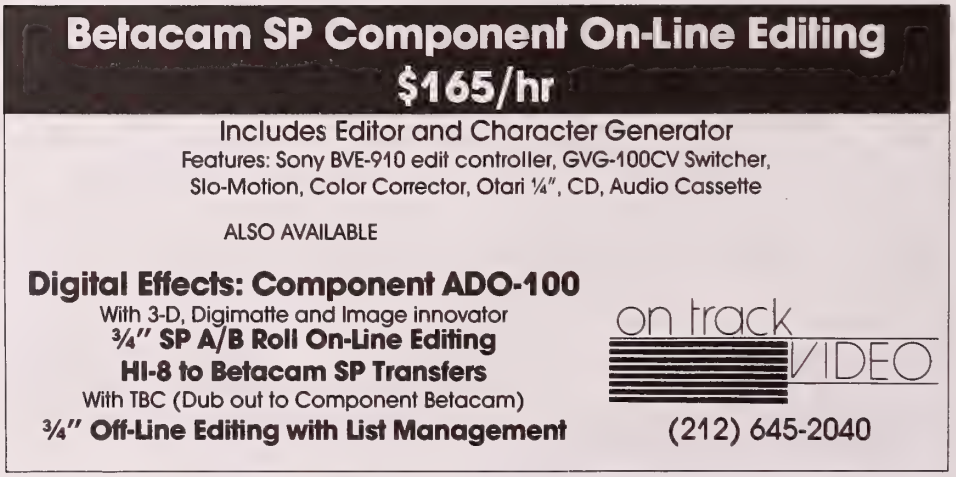
ICRONOS INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FILM, October, France. Estab. in 1988, biennial fest is centerpiece of archaeology-awareness program & currently largest regular European fest of its kind. 60-75 recent prods incl. in program. Fest also offers informal venue where filmmakers & scientific advisors can meet w/ colleagues. Most of fest held in Bordeaux; previous fests have had attendance up to 8,000. Theme is Greece, but selections about other civilizations & topics such as historic preservation, experimental archaeology & advanced scientific & technological appls in field also incl. 6 non-monetary awards determined by int'l jury; 7th public prize initiated in 1992. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Contact: Phillipe Dorthe, c/o AFIFA, 5 rue Pascal-Lafargue, 33300 Bordeaux, France: tel: 011 33 56 39 41 96; fax: 011 33 56 39 29 66.

LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 15-20, Germany. 37th edition of annual all-doc fest accepts short & features & videos. Fest seeks to promote int'l doc & animated films & to provide opportunity for filmmakers, producers, distributors, media experts & filmgoers to meet. Program consists of int'l competition, special programs, video workshops & retro. Competition incl. separate cats for docs of all genres. Cash prizes awarded for features & prods under 45 min. Prods awarded prizes at int'l fests after June 1, 1993 are eligible. The Field in NY is accepting preview tapes (VHS). Deadline: May 15. Submit tapes w/ brief synopsis (incl. bio, prod. credits, date & place of first screening & awards) & SASE for return of materials to: Leipzig Documentary Film Fest, c/o The Field, 161 6th Ave., 14th fl., NY, NY 10013. The Field cannot answer questions or provide additional info. For info, contact: Jurgen Bruning in Berlin; tel: 011 49 30 782 8702; fax: 011 49 30 782-9740.









LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, August, Switzerland. Now in 47th yr, fest has been described as "one of world's top half-dozen fests" w/ reputation for innovative programming & support of alternative visions from ind. directors. Unique open-air screenings in Piazza Grande, which holds 7,000. Special sections & out-of-competition screenings. Competition accepts 1st, 2nd & 3rd fiction features, art films, low-budget films, inds & cinema d'auteur. Must be over 60 min. European premieres only, completed w/in previous yr. Educational, advertising & scientific films ineligible. Prizes: Golden Leopard (Grand Prix) & City of Locarno Grand Prize (30,000SF); Silver Leopard (Grand Prix de Jury) & 2nd Prize of City of Locarno (15,000SF); Bronze Leopard & 3rd Prize of City of Locarno (5000SF). Films should be subtitled in French. Fest provides 5-day hospitality to director plus 1 rep. of films in competition. More than 100 buyers chosen from biggest US, European & Japanese distributors & TV. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Marco Muller, director, Locarno Int'l Film Fest, Via della Posta 6, CH-6600, Locarno, Switzerland.

PROFESSIONAL DISCOUNTS

Following is a listing of companies that offer discounts to AIVF members. Call for details: (212) 473-3400.

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Bill Creston, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010; (212) 924-4893. Contact: Barbara Rosenthal

Camera Mart, 456 West 55th St. New York, NY 10019; (212) 757-6977. Contact: Shimon Ben-Dor

Cutloose Editorial, 30A West 94th St. New York, NY 10025; (212) 678-2560. Contact: Bruce Follmer

L. Mathew Miller Associates, LTD., 48 West 21st St. New York, NY 10010; 1-800-221-9328 or (212) 741-8011. Contact: Steve Cohen

Mill Valley Film Group, 397 Miller Avenue, Ste 2, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 381-9309. Contact: John Antonelli

PrimaLux Video, 30 West 26th St. New York, NY 10010; (212) 206-1402. Contact: Matt Clarke

Rafik, 814 Broadway New York, NY 10003; (212) 475-9110. Contact: Mr. Rafik

Studio Film & Tape, 630 Ninth Ave, New York, NY 10036; (212) 977-9330. Contact: Bill Eiseman or: 6674 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90038; 1-800-444-9330. Contact: Carol Dean

STS, 316 F. Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002; 1-800-426-9083. Contact: Patrick Skeham

Technicolor Inc., East Coast Division, 321 W. 44th St. NY, NY 10036; (212) 582-7310. Contact: Ray Chung

Video Arts Systems and Technology, Box 433 Manasquan, NJ 08736; (201) 223-5999. Contact: Nicholas G. Kuntz

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FLAN DE COCO FILMS in nat'l search for new writers. We are young ind. prod. co. looking for undiscovered talent to collaborate w/ on development of features. Accepting submissions in any form (screenplays, plays, short stories, etc.). Flan de Coco Films, Box 93032, Los Angeles, CA 90093.

INDEPENDENT producer/director seeks feature scripts for 1994-5 prod. Must be low-budget-minded & character/relationship-oriented w/ unspecific locations. Send synopsis & 10-page sample to: Aurora Films, 844 Bates, Birmingham, MI 48009.

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PRODUCER w/ financing seeks low-budget feature script for hot, young director. Must be character/relationship-driven, funny. Prefer characters in 20s. Submit synopsis through

atty./agent or write for release form to: Synopsis, Box 29314, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

SCREENPLAY CONTESTS (all 35 of them) offer $1.4 million in cash, recognition, publicity, representation, fellowships, etc. Do not ignore this route to success. For info on comprehensive screenplay contest book: Writer's Aide, 1685 So. Colorado Blvd., Box 237-C, Denver, CO 80222.

SCRIPT SUPERVISION SEMINAR in NYC, April 2-3, 9:30 to 5:30, w/ Lynne Twentyman, I.A.T.S.E. Locals 161 & 871. (Credits incl. *Scent of a Woman* & *Carlito's Way*). Covers feature film, series TV & commercials. $295 per session. (212) 580-0677.

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SOUND MAN w/ own equipment & experience working w/ Hi8 video needed for video-to-film transferred direct to video feature. Must be NY Tri State area-based. Call John (718) 389-9871.

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VIDEOGRAPHER w/ own Hi8 camera needed for video-to-film transferred direct to video feature. Must be NY Tri State area-based. Call John (718) 389-9871.

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of The Independent, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearning house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations, and organizations:

The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, National Video Resources, and the Consolidated Edison Company of New York.

Thanks also go to the following individuals and businesses:

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NOTICES ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE. AIVF MEMBERS RECEIVE FIRST PRIORITY; OTHERS ARE INCLUDED AS SPACE PERMITS. *THE INDEPENDENT* RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH. DEADLINES FOR NOTICES WILL BE RESPECTED. THESE ARE THE 8TH OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G., APRIL 1 FOR THE JUNE ISSUE.) PLEASE NOTE NEW DEADLINE. SEND TO: INDEPENDENT NOTICES, FIVF, 625 BROADWAY, NY, NY 10012.

Conferences • Seminars

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on & taught by professionals in field. Contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (914) 552-8760.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from Audio/Video Synchronization to Introduction to Multimedia Prod. & Audio Preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

iEAR STUDIOS presents nat'l interactive electronic arts telecast w/ Pauline Oliveros, composer, performing segment from *Winga the Queen-King*. W/ access to KU-band satellite dish, you can interact live through telephone & picture-tel. March 30, 7pm EST, G Star 1, transponder 3 horizontal (color bars & tone from 6:30-7pm). Contact: (518) 276-4783.

SMPTE will conduct all-day tutorial, "Pixels, Pictures & Perception: The Differences & Similarities between Computer Imagery, Film & Video" Mar. 5 at Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC. Charles Poynton of Sun Microsystems will lead int'l team of presenters. Advance registration: $35/members, $25 /student members, $125/nonmembers, $60/students. Call: Linda Young (212) 757-4580.

TISCH SCHOOL OF THE ARTS at New York University will hold its annual Video Festival, March 30-April 1, 6-10 p.m. at Casa Italiana, 24 W. 12th St., NY, NY. For more info, call the Office of Special Events (212) 998-1795.

VIDEO EXPO/IMAGE WORLD, expo & seminar program for video prod., computer animation, graphics, multimedia, presentation, digital imaging & prepress imaging professionals, will be held April 25-29 at the ExpoCenter in Chicago & Sept. 19-23 at Jacob Javits Convention Center in NYC. For more info, call: Janet Vargas, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc. (914) 328-9157.

VIDEOMAKER EXPO, focusing on tools & techniques of video prod., will run from April 21-23 at Meadowlands Convention Center, Secaucus, NJ. For info, contact: Chris Thomas (916) 891-8410.

VIRGINIA CENTER FOR MEDIA & CULTURE will hold its 2nd annual conference in Charlottesville, VA, Mar. 25-26. Preconf. workshop on fundraising for ind. film/video: Mar. 24. Conference incl. keynote by John Handardt, screenings from Sinking Creek fest collection & Media Forum on impact of Info Superhighway on indies. Contact: Michelle Branigan, Center Ctr, 145 Ednam Dr., Charlottesville, VA 22903; (804) 924-3296.

Films • Tapes Wanted

ALIVE TV is now accepting submissions of new films/videos. Experimental films, performance pieces, animation, narrative, shorts & essay works unique in content or style desired. Preference placed on work under 1/2 hr. *Alive TV* tries to be wake-up call to mainstream media (& PBS). Please watch program on local PBS station & only submit work that seems in sync w/ our goals. Help us survive as 1 of last non-mainstream programs on network TV. Send work on 1/2" or 3/4" w/ filmmaker's bio & film bio (awards, distributors, etc.) to: Neil Sieling, exec. producer, *Alive TV*, KTCA, 172 E. 4th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

BANANA CLUB, ind. prod. company specializing in networking w/ Japanese investors, producers, promoters, distributors, recording labels, TV networks & other media industries, seeks new materials in cinema, video, music & performing arts. Deadline: ongoing. Send treatment, description, samples, press kit, standard release form & $20 filing fee to: Banana Club, 41 Union Sq. West, ste. 714, NY, NY 10003.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION, seeks films/videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs

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CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o *Screen* Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE, 1/2-hour, monthly news & public affairs program, shown on public-access stations across country, is looking for footage or produced pieces (1-30 min.) on Central America, Cuba & Haiti (especially Haiti, Salvadoran elections, return of Guatamalan refugees from Mexico). Also looking for someone in D.C. to tape interviews for show. Can't pay, but can cover costs of tape & mailing. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COLLECTING COLLECTORS, video screening series that celebrates people w/ passion for collecting, seeks everything from unedited tapes to feature films. Send VHS tape w/ SASE & description to: Danny Leonard, media arts coordinator, Center for Creative Work, 425 Bush St., ste. 425, San Francisco, CA 94108; (510) 527-4814.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educ. access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly NYC cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-935 or fax: 9337.

THE EDGE, Denver-based collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres considered. 16mm, S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

THE E-TEAM, children's TV show w/ environmental theme, seeks film/video footage & completed works that maintain environmental, nature or science theme. Fees paid for footage used on air. Contact: David Calderwood, producer, Euro-Pacific Prods. (908) 530-4451.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FEEDBACK, anthology cable-access program of ind. work, is accepting work on 3/4", 1/2" or Hi-8. Send tape & SASE to: N.A.M.E. Gallery, Attn. Video Commitee, 700 North Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), cable-access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred, no nudity). Videos credited. Tapes returned. Please mail to: Fem TV, Box 66604, Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). For more info, contact: Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, ste. 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10112.

HOME GIRL PRODUCTIONS, consortium of women filmmakers, seeks home movies from lesbians for possible inclusion in feature length film. Proceeds from film will go to creation of lesbian film fund. Send inquiries or movies to: Home Girl Productions, 662 North Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069.

IMAGE (con)TEXT, video program of issues of contextualization, use & ownership of public & private images in media, will be screened at 1994 Northeast Regional Conference of the Society for Photographic Education, Nov. 4-6. Deadline: April 1. Don't send tapes, send SASE for prospectus to: Gene Gort/SPE, Hartford Art School, Univ. of Hartford, West Hartford, CT 06117.

IND. PROGRAMMING NETWORK seeks student & ind. works from around country for new cable TV channel called XTV. For more info, call: Otto Khera at (602) 948-0381.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original

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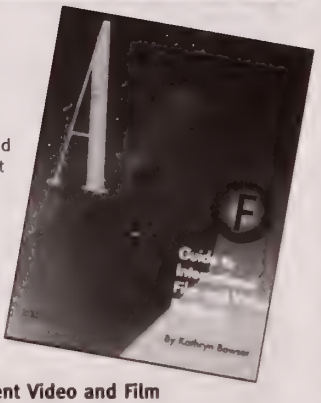
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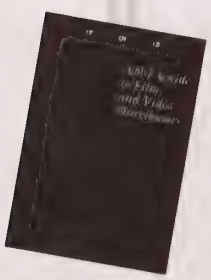
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An important reference source which belongs in the library of every media professional: independent producers, distributors, festival directors, programmers, curators, exhibitors.



AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors
A Publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film
edited by Kathryn Bowser
184 pages, $19.50

A must-read for independent film and video-makers searching for the right distributor. *The AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors* presents handy profiles of over 150 commercial and nonprofit distributors, practical information and company statistics on the type of work handled, primary markets, relations with producers, marketing and promotion, foreign distribution and contacts. Fully indexed, with additional contact lists of cable/satellite services and public television outlets, as well as a bibliography. This is the best compendium of distribution and information especially tailored for independent producers available.

Alternative Visions
Distributing Independent Video in a Home Video World
by Debra Franco
a co-publication of AFI and FIVF, 181 pages
$12.95/$9.95 AIVF and AFI member price



Video cassettes and video stores have changed forever the economics of distribution for all moving image media—including alternative films and tapes. What has happened to institutional markets? What promise does home video distribution really hold for non-mainstream work? Chapters cover selling to schools, libraries, and individual consumers. Includes detailed case studies of the marketing of eight independent works. Essential reading for anyone with an interest in home video distribution.

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NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for the Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, invitational fest in 5th yr. at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding reference file of S-8 filmmakers. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, s.a.s. postcard & $5 w/ support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, S-8 filmography, stills, photo of yourself (w/ name, address, phone), description of films (duration, fps, sound/silent, color/b&w, yr.). Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, Old & New Masters of S-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

OPEN WIDE, weekly, half-hour TV series produced by CBC Manitoba that profiles best of alternative, underground & ind. cinema from Canada, US & world, seeks submissions. Looking for experimental, video art, comedy, drama, animation, docs & music videos between 30 sec. & 20 min. Submissions on 16mm, VHS, Hi-8, 3/4", 1/2" or video. Film/video associations & distribs. should send catalogs w/ submissions. License fee paid if selected for broadcast. Submissions may be in any language from any time. Send to: *Open Wide*, CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2G1, Attn: Shipping Dept.; (204) 788-3111, Gavin Rich, producer.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests noncommercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot (e.g., in volcanoes or underwater) & events from natural & physical science worlds. Contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017, (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THIRD EYE MEDIA GROUP seeks interviews for series of videos on labor & arts. First tape focuses on issues w/in media-arts community.

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers

When you join the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, you're doing something for yourself—and for others. Membership entitles you to a wide range of benefits. Plus, it connects you with a national network of independent producers. Adding your voice helps us all. The stronger AIVF is, the more we can act as advocate for the interests of independents like yourself—inside the corridors of Washington, with the press, and with others who affect our livelihoods.

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Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent.* Published 10 times a year, each issue includes festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. And special issues that highlight regional activity and focus on subjects such as media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL BUREAU SERVICES

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.We also work directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, or serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors.

INFORMATION SERVICES

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to the field. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

NETWORKING

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

ADVOCACY

Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independents, AIVF is there working for you.

DISCOUNTED BOOKS

We have a large inventory of media books, as well as publishing our own titles on festivals, distribution, and foreign production resources. Members receive substantial discounts.

ACCESS TO INSURANCE

Membership makes you eligible to purchase health, disability, and life insurance, a dental plan and liability insurance through AIVF suppliers.

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Discounts on equipment rentals, processing, editing, and other production necessities are available.

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BOOKS FOR SALE

- ❑ The AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals ($29.95/$24.95 member price)
- The AIVF Guide to Film & Video Distributors ($19.50)
- Alternative Visions ($12.95/$9.95 AIVF or AFI members)

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Individuals who have worked to develop unions, spearheaded personnel policy reforms, etc. are encouraged to respond. Resulting tape will be distributed free to media-arts organizations, serving as progressive organizing tool for workers to establish regulatory policies in areas of health benefits, contracts & other compensations. Contact: Third Eye Media, c/o Labor & the Arts, 103 Greene Ave. #2, Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 789-0633 (ph./fax).

TV 2000, TV pilot, seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, seen by 9 million people on 42 broadcast & cablecast stations nationwide last yr., seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, animation, performance films/videos & media art under 28 min. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs preferred. For more info, contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA and NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2" , 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities • Gigs

CD-ROM ART/CULTURE MAGAZINE seeks contributors. Bicoastal, interactive multimedia pub. (accessible as computer interface) will incorporate video, text, sound & graphics. Seeking work from writers and artists in all media. Focus is on formal experimentation & mixed media compositions. Themes incl.: media critcism; cybernetics; found sound/imagery & info overload. Send submissions (film/videomakers should submit in VHS format) to: GUSH metamedia, Box 3291, NY, NY 10185. For more info, contact: Adam (718) 858-9379 or Jack (415) 776-9400.

IND. PRODUCERS interested in working for NYC agencies in freelance media prod. are invited to participate in new database directory to be distributed through Crosswalks TV & other sources. Will link inds. w/ government agencies creating media. $10 registration fee gets listing w/ 1 update per yr. For info & appl., write: SCS Productions, 244 W. 54 St. #800,



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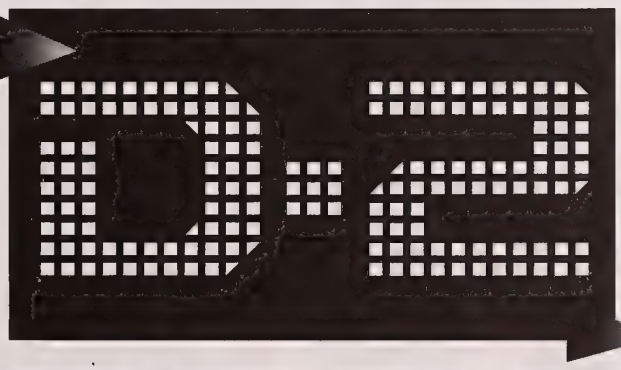
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LANCIT MEDIA PRODUCTIONS, producer of Emmy Award-winning *Reading Rainbow* children's series, seeks production interns. Interns will have access to all phases of prod. process from story & location research to editing. Term length & schedule flexible. No experience necessary. Contact: Arti Haberberg (212) 977-9100 (M-F, 10 am-5 pm).

RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, 4-year public liberal arts college, seeks appls. from media producers, artists & other media professionals to teach couses in all forms of media prod. & theory. Send vitae & cover letters to: Dr. Pat Keeton, convenor, Communications Major, School of Contemporary Arts, Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

PUBLICATIONS

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers is avail. for $14.95 + shipping & handling. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, Dept 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., Area M, NY, NY 10019.

NAMAC offers member directory, up-to-the-min. compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media-arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org. history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC ($25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members) to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste. 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES 27th Annual Report is avail. Contains info on Endowment programs & complete listing of endowment grants. Report is free. Send requests to: NEH 1992 Annual Report, Rm. 407, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artist's right as well as federal & state law. To request a copy, call People for the American way; (202)467-4999.

WIDE ANGLE seeks papers for special issue on Children & Film. Looking for articles that address topics such as: theories concerning children's spectatorship, issues of spectatorship concerning images of children in films, child & youth performers, films for & by children. Manuscripts will not be returned. Deadline: June 1. Send articles in duplicate w/ abstract to: Ruth Bradley, *Wide Angle*, 378 Lindley Hall, School of Film, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701; fax: (614) 593-1328.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ the NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris (612) 341-0755.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. Change, Inc., Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., Ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St. NE, Ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER is accepting appls for presentation funds—partial support to organizations for the rentals of video, audio & time-based computer work & for artists' fees for screenings. Appls accepted at any time. ETC also offers over $50,000 in finishing funds to support more than 100 NY state media artists. Eligible forms incl. single & multiple channel videos, installations, sound art & computer-based cinematic work. All genres, incl. doc, narrative & experimental eligible. Applicants must be residents of NY; students are ineligible. Deadline: March 15. For appl. & guidelines, contact: Sherry Miller Hocking (607) 687-4341.

ETC ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY PROGRAM is accepting appls from artists interested in studying techniques of video image processing during an intensive 5-day residency. Artists must have prior experience in video prod. & must incl. resumé & project description indicating how image processing is integrated in their work. For more info, contact: Ralph Hocking (607) 687-4341.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free of charge to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications ($35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, executive director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

ROBERT FLAHERTY SEMINAR residencies avail. Aug. 6-12 for up to 4 Philadelphia-area film & video artists & up to 2 media programmers, curators, or critics to attend seminar in Aurora, NY. Founded in honor of doc pioneer Robert Flaherty, annual, week-long event, in 40th yr., features intensive round-clock screenings of new & cutting-edge media spanning all genres, styles & content. 100 participants, incl. media artists, scholars, critics, curators & students discuss work w/ artists. Held at Wells College on Lake Cayuga in upstate NY. Will highlight works by Asian & Asian American makers. Guest curators: L. Somi Roy, Erik Barnouw & Patricia Zimmermann. Residents awarded to artists w/ at least 1 project that has been exhibited publically. Applicants must reside in Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, or Montgomery County. Incl. full room & board, r/t travel & stipend. Announcements made by mail after May 5. Deadline: April 1. Guidelines avail. through: David Haas, PIFVA, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6594 or contact: Sally Berger, Int'l Film Seminars, 305 W. 21st St., NY, NY 10011; (212) 727-7262; fax: 691-9565.

WRITERS WORKSHOP, nonprofit organization dedicated to discovery & development of new screenwriters, is accepting submissions for monthly reading by WW Actors Repertory Company before a live audience, w/ prominent film/TV professionals serving as moderators to critique screenplay. Past moderators include Oliver Stone & Ray Bradbury. For more info, send SASE to: Writers Workshop, Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

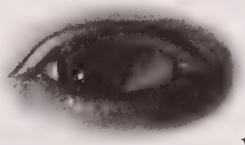
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Memoranda

ANNUAL MEETING MEETING & BOARD NOMINATIONS

The annual AIVF membership meeting will be held on Friday evening, April 22 at Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue, New York City. In addition to submitting advance nominations for the board of directors to our office in writing, members may make and second nominations at the annual meeting. [In the last issue, we erroneously wrote that board members will be *elected* at the membership meeting; only *nominations* occur at that time.]

AIVF board members are elected to a 3-year term of office; the board gathers four times a year in NYC for 2-day meetings (AIVF pays the travel costs if you live outside the city).

We have an active board; members must be prepared to set aside adequate time to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

* Attendance at all board meetings and participation in conference calls when necessary;
* Preparation for meetings by reading advance materials sent by staff;
* Active participation in one or more committees as determined by the organization's needs and as requested by the board chair or executive director; fulfillment of commitments within agreed-upon deadlines;
* General support for the executive director and staff as needed.

Board nominations must be made and seconded by current AIVF members in good standing. You may nominate yourself.

To make a nomination, send or fax us the name, address, and telephone numbers of the (1) nominee, (2) nominator, and (3) member seconding the nomination. We cannot accept nominations over the phone.

We will be sending AIVF members a mailing on the annual meeting in late March, with information on time and place and procedures for submitting work to the open screening program. Please watch your mail for details.

DISCOUNTED DISABILITY INSURANCE



We are pleased to offer a new discounted disability insurance program through Mutual of Omaha. Disability insurance can mean the difference between security and insolvency for independents, whose income might be cut off entirely if they are unable to work. But not only is it very difficult for a self-employed individual to secure this type of insurance, it can be very expensive; the prices offered by this plan represent a savings of approximately 40% over individual plans, so this is a significant new benefit that we are very happy to be making available to members of AIVF. A mailing was sent to AIVF members by Mutual of Omaha; if you have detailed questions relating to your individual situation or did not receive the mailing, please call Doug Polifron, the Mutual of Omaha agent handling the offering, at (212) 490-7979. (Once the plan is in effect, you will be able to purchase it from any Mutual of Omaha agent nationwide, the same as AIVF's health insurance plan; Mr. Polifron is organizing this initial offering.)

Twenty-five members will have to enroll under the initial offering for the plan to go into effect; please act now if you have been thinking of buying this type of insurance, so that we can make the benefit permanently available to members.

ON-LINE UPDATE

All good things come to those who wait, and at press time we are still waiting for final arrangements for a permanent home for our members to network and exchange information on America Online. Meanwhile, members are enthusiastically using the AIVF bulletin board lent to us by Abbate Video, commenting on the new technologies focused on in the January/February issue of *The Independent*.

If you missed the information in the last magazine: once you are on-line, pull down "GO TO" from the menu at the top of the screen, and select "key word"; at the prompt, type *abbate*, then select the aivf option under topic listings. To subscribe to AOL, call (800) 827-6364. We hope that by the time you read this, there will be a signpost in abbate directing you to AIVF's new permanent keyword.

MARCH EVENTS

Get-Togethers

MEET AND GREETS

These are opportunities for AIVF members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. Free; open to AIVF members only; limited to 30 participants; RSVP essential.

JAMES YEE
Executive Director, ITVS
Tuesday, March 1, 7:00 pm

Coming in April
LYNN HOLST
Vice-President, Program Development, *American Playhouse*
Thursday, April 28, 6:00 pm

"MEET YOUR (FELLOW) MAKER" A MONTHLY MEMBER SALON



Our December holiday party was a smashing success — 300 members and friends attended! — and it confirmed our sense that members want opportunities to meet and shmooze. We are setting up a monthly early-evening event in the back room at Telephone Bar and Grill, 149 Second Ave. (9th St.), where members can get together informally once a month from 6:00-8:00 pm. (Drinks are half price for the first hour, so come early and get happy!) Salons will be the third Tuesday of each month, beginning Tuesday, March 15. This program is being organized by AIVF member Jonathan Berman, maker of *The Shvitz*. (Make it a regular date: plan ahead for Tuesday, April 19!)

MONTHLY MEMBER ORIENTATION



We are initiating a new program to help new and renewing members become familiar with the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and learn their way around the resource library. Our first monthly orientation is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, at 6:00 pm, at the AIVF offices. RSVP helpful but not essential.

RECEPTION - PAN AFRICAN FILM CONFERENCE

CANCELLED

AIVF will be co-sponsoring a reception for participants in "Black Cinema: Celebration of Pan-African Film," a conference to be held at NYU March 24-30. Details were not finalized at press time, but will include filmmakers, critics and scholars from Africa and the Diaspora, including such invitees as Julie Dash, Stanley Crouch, Souleymane Cissé, Spike Lee, Idrissa Ouedraogo, and Haile Gerima. Washington and Reginald Hudlin. For more information on the conference and reception call NYU, (212) 998-1713. Reception co-sponsored by AIVF, NYU, and the Black Filmmaker Foundation.

Reception: Friday, March 25, 7:30-9:30 pm
Location: NYU Tisch School of the Arts, 721 Broadway
Price: Free; RSVP necessary

Learning Experiences

WORKING LOW-BUDGET ON HI-8

Award-winning filmmaker Ellen Spiro (*Greetings from Out Here*; *Diana's Hair Ego*) will offer a workshop passing on what she's learned working with the medium and the secrets of her success. Participants should bring their own camcorders, if they have them. This workshop needs a minimum of 20 participants; pre-registration is essential.
Co-sponsored with Women Make Movies

Date: Thursday, March 17, 7:00 pm
Location: Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway (Grand Street), ste 500
Price: $40 AIVF & WMM members; $50 others; call AIVF to pre-register.

WORKING, EATING, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR INDEPENDENTS

Yo-yo income, constant outflow: independents are a group in particular need of strategies to ensure that the work gets made, the bills get paid, and longterm financial security isn't an impossible dream. Arline Segal of Smith Barney Shearson and Nan Buzard of Working Assets are crackerjack financial planners and specialists in Socially Responsible Investing; they will address planning principles for independents and investment options in SRI.

Date: Wednesday, March 23, 7 pm
Location: tba; call office
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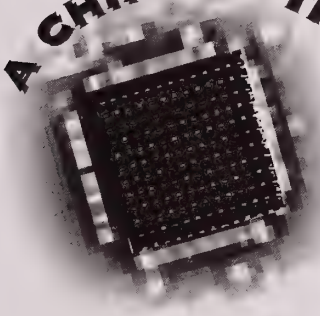
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COVER: Paul Kwan returns to the Cholon temple in Vietnam to pay homage to his deceased father in *Anatomy of a Springroll*, an ITVS-funded project that will receive its broadcast premiere on PBS on April 25. In this issue, critic Bérénice Reynaud looks at this and other works by Asian Americans, from *The Joy Luck Club* to *Totally F***ed Up*, that have made their way into the mainstream in recent years.
Photo: Arnold Iger, courtesy filmmakers

THIS PAGE: David Henry Hwang's Broadway hit *M. Butterfly* made its way onto the silver screen in 1993, with John Lone playing the diva/spy.
Courtesy Warner Bros.

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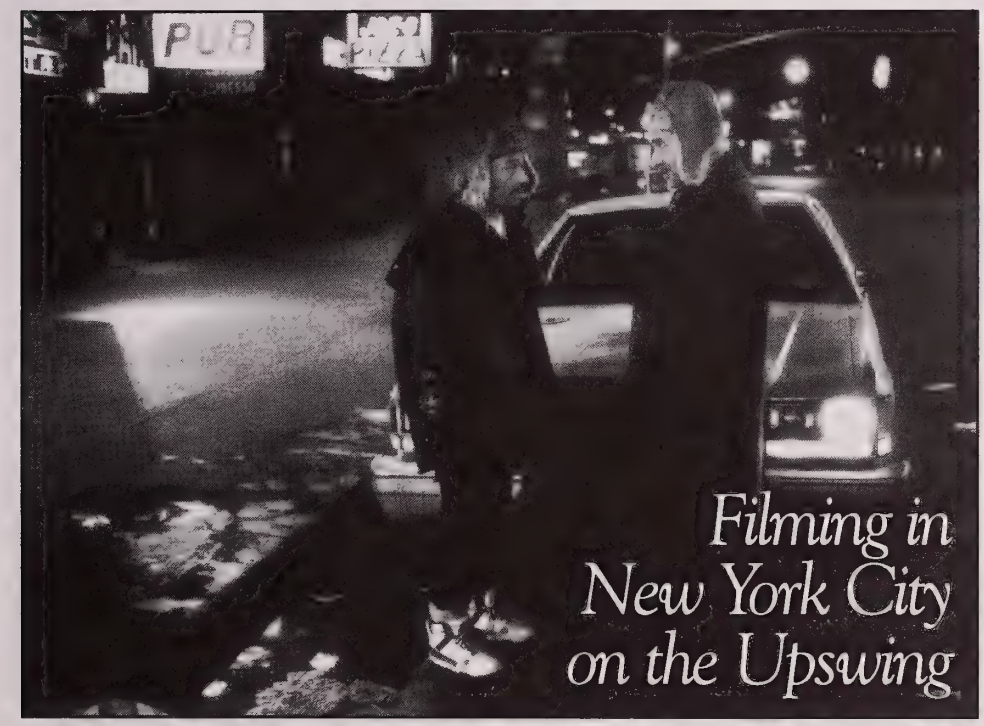


The American Film Institute

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THE PHOENIX RISES



Film shoots in New York City (like Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth*, pictured) are on the increase for the first time in a decade, according to a new report from the Mayor's Film Office.
Courtesy Fine Line Features

New York City is in again—with filmmakers, at least. After 10 years in which the city lost much of its celluloid luster—and productions—to other regions, capped off in 1990 and 1991 with a six-month boycott by the major film studios, production in the city is on the rise. In the first 10 months of 1993, the number of permits issued for feature film production by the Mayor's Office of Film, Theater, and Broadcasting rose 30 percent from 1992. Even back in 1992, before things started to pick up, the overall economic impact of the city's film biz reached Jurassic proportions: $3 billion was poured directly or indirectly into the economy.

These figures were included in a report released last December by the Mayor's Film Office. The report, "Beyond the Glitz: Lights, Cameras, Jobs," makes the case that film and video productions—from independents to feature films to commercials—are crucial to the city's economic well-being, and argues that the city should actively seek to strengthen its competitive edge.

The report makes several recommendations that, if adopted, could prove useful to independent makers. But the recommendations were formulated under the administration of Mayor David Dinkins and Film Office commissioner Richard Brick, who resigned January 21 when incoming mayor Rudolph Giuliani didn't bother to contact him more than a week into the new administration. Since neither Giuliani nor his deputy mayor for finance and economic development, John Dyson, have laid out their visions yet for dealing with the city's film and television industries, it remains to be seen whether or not the mayor's camp will act on the recommendations.

The report states that in recent years, the city has lost business to Canada, Texas, Florida, and elsewhere. These regions, with lower production costs, tax rebates, low-cost financing, and government investment in studio facilities, are particularly appealing to independents with major visions and minor budgets. So, naturally, economic planners think the city should fight back with similar incentives. These recommendations include:

- Expand financing programs and make them more accessible to those who meet a minimum percentage standard of filming or production spending in the city.
- Facilitate cooperation between labor unions and producers to standardize union contracts for low-budget productions.
- In collaboration with the city's Economic Policy and Marketing Group, establish a liaison with New York University's Center for Advanced Technology, which can offer, among other things, laboratory space for experimentation in digital technologies.
- Encourage the development of a privately run production office center in Manhattan that will offer low-cost office space to producers.

"The office center would decidedly be below market rents for office space," Commissioner Brick explained shortly before his resignation. And by facilitating negotiations with labor unions, the Film Office could help eliminate the hassles that scare off many independent producers. "Independents tend to be much less practiced in working with unions, and it is a union town," Brick said.

Despite the uncertainty of the recommendations' future under the Giuliani administration, independents are hopeful that steps will be taken to facilitate filming in the city. "New York has to aggressively pursue the business," said Mike Bencivenga, a Queens-based filmmaker who in 1991 nixed plans to make his first feature film, *Losers in Love*, in New York because of labor trouble and cost constraints. "The next film I'm doing is set in Hoboken, New Jersey, and Manhattan," he told *The Independent*. "In raising money, people are saying, 'You're not really going to shoot in New York?' They're concerned it will balloon the budget. But I'm born and raised here, and I believe in bringing the business back."

ROBERT V. WOLF

Robert V. Wolf is a writer living on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Life after GATT

Just days before last December's deadline for the signing of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), an impasse nearly scuttled seven years of negotiations involving 117 countries. On one side were the Europeans led by France (which taxes non-European films to help subsidize its film industry), insisting that movies are cultural property, aka "art," and therefore must be exempt from the negotiations. In opposition, the United States, for whom movies are business and cultural property is an oxymoron, wanted movies under GATT, which, in the interest of free trade, would reduce the tariffs and quotas imposed by the Europeans.

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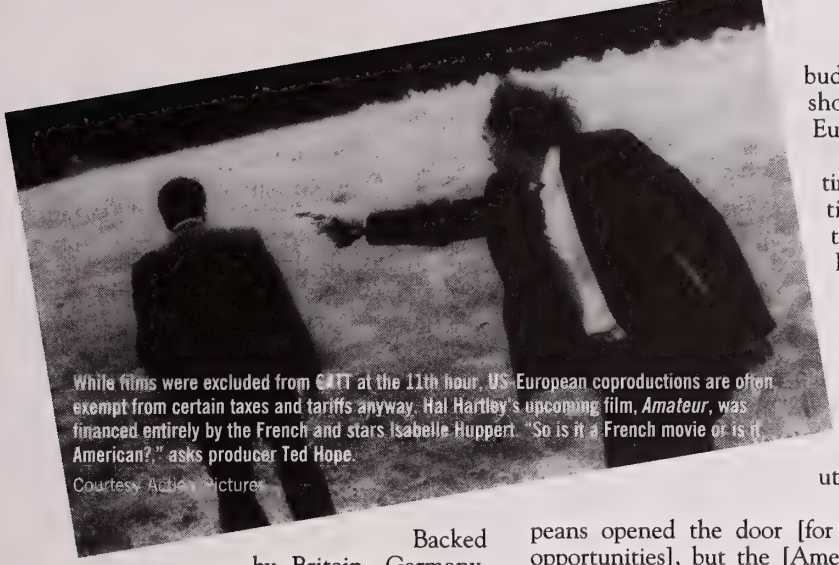
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While films were excluded from GATT at the 11th hour, US-European coproductions are often exempt from certain taxes and tariffs anyway. Hal Hartley's upcoming film, *Amateur*, was financed entirely by the French and stars Isabelle Huppert. "So is it a French movie or is it American?," asks producer Ted Hope.

Courtesy Action Pictures

Backed by Britain, Germany, and Spain, France not only succeeded in having the hotly contested audiovisual category (which included film, television programming, and recorded music) dropped from the accord, it also initiated a movement to extend its tax-for-subsidy system to other countries.

Paying fewer subsidies and scrapping quotas that limit the amount of American product on European TV are only a few of the topics that arose during months of often-heated debates between the European Commission and Motion Picture Association of America president Jack Valenti, who represented American majors throughout the talks. In the end, however, debates over the treaty's content did little other than strengthen Europe's love-hate relationship with Hollywood.

The bottom line is that Europeans are miffed by how well American blockbusters perform on their turf. Hollywood movies account for 80 percent of theatrical releases in Europe, compared to the two percent niche that foreign films secure in the American market. Taxing films from the U.S. to subsidize European production may seem a bit extreme, but as one proponent of independent cinema pointed out in a recent op-ed piece that ran in the *New York Times*, the idea may not be all bad.

In "Use Junk To Bankroll Art," which appeared in the *Times* on January 17, 1994, Dan Talbot, president of New Yorker Films, suggests translating the French system into a 10 percent tax on movie admissions in the U.S. Talbot proposes the money go into a fund to finance independent low- and medium-budget films. As outlined in the article, the plan deserves serious attention, although it fails to note that the big multiplex cinemas have already borrowed something from abroad: wide-screen commercial advertising. Why not add a 10 percent surtax on revenues garnered by theaters that subject ticket buyers to large-screen advertisements? Expanding this further, would it not prove beneficial for American independents and the European film community to work together for 1) wider distribution throughout the U.S. and 2) reduced taxes, tariffs, and quotas on independently produced, low-budget movies shown in Europe?

In the meantime, coproductions between the U.S. and Europe not only circumvent the issue of taxes and tariffs, they can provide financing and distribution, too.

"The Europeans opened the door [for coproduction opportunities], but the [American] studios didn't want to get involved, because of all the bureaucratic inefficiency," says independent producer Robert Manning, founder of the New York Film Expo. "They didn't like putting up millions of dollars and being told they had to have a foreign director or whatever." Manning continues: "The Canadians are far more open, probably because they don't put that kind of money at stake on a single picture. Coproduction works well where moderate amounts of money are involved, so it should work very well for independents in the U.S."

In recent years, many American independents have taken advantage of foreign coproduction opportunities, and still others have had entire productions funded by overseas investors. Ted Hope, producer of Hal Hartley's films, asserts that Hartley is better known and his films more successful in Europe than in the U.S. Hartley's upcoming film, *Amateur*, was financed entirely by the French and stars Isabelle Huppert. "So is it a French movie or is it American?" Hope asks with a laugh. "The tradition of independent filmmaking is more European than American. Support from the European film community, in the form of financing and distribution, could pull the independents together," he adds.

RENFREU NEFF

Renfreu Neff covers film and cultural events in the U.S. and in Europe.

VIDEOMAKERS FIND HOMES FOR PROGRAMS ON LEASED ACCESS NETS

Independent videomakers take note: As mandated in the 1992 Cable Act, cable operators across the country now are required to set aside up to 15 percent of their air time for programs submitted from outside producers. As a result, groups of independent videomakers are joining networks—called "leased access networks"—that buy bulk air time in markets across the country. Joining a leased access network has many benefits, including affordability, access to Nielsen ratings, and an opportunity to reap a portion of advertising revenues if commercials are aired during the broadcast.

Videomaker magazine is the latest to start such a network, which it hopes to have in 20-million homes in the U.S.'s top 20 markets by this month. "It's a massive undertaking," says *Videomaker* founder Matt York, whose network will aim to showcase a variety of independent videomakers.

Compared to the handful of other current and planned leased access networks such as ValueVision (focused on home shopping) and the SUR Corporation (delivering South American sports and news), Videomaker's network will be broad in scope. A 30-minute billiards segment could lead into a half-hour rock-climbing demonstration or an experimental work about women of color. "This is not a network with an identity," York says. "All we are is a conduit, a delivery company. We're gonna coach people along the way, but ultimately they're in business for themselves."

For independent videomakers, joining a leased access network could mean great business. For one, it is affordable (running a 30-minute segment on *Videomaker*'s network will cost approximately $650 for every million households it reaches). Secondly, leased access networks receive Nielsen ratings, which are impossible to obtain without a viewing audience of at least 20 million households. Third—and for some most important—if an independent producer chooses to insert commercials into the segment, he or she can solicit advertising spots without having to share the profits with the leased access network or cable operator, according to York. He sees this possibility for large revenue as an advantage for independents. "If there's a decent market for billiard players, rather than a network exploit that advertising niche, the independent producer gets to reap the benefits of that lucrative market," York says.

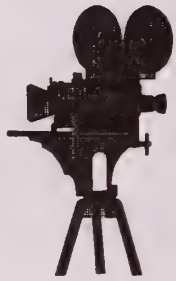
However, perhaps due to this potential for profit, leased access networks have not found it easy to buy air time since last September's mandate was imposed. "The cable companies like to stonewall you," says John Grosfeld, a circulation assistant at *Videomaker*. "Sometimes they're really helpful getting stuff on, but a lot of the big cable operators are trying to fight it."

ValueVision's chief financial officer, Mark Payne, says that even though his home shopping network intends to operate as a leased access network, the rates he has been quoted by cable operators are too high. "From a practical standpoint," he says, "we're not getting any use out of being a leased access network." ValueVisions's programming has been running on unaffiliated month-to-month agreements with cable companies like MSO and Time Warner, while it awaits new and lower rate regulations to be determined by the FCC in coming months.

Some independent videomakers have found cable operators uncooperative in other respects. *Videomaker* has unearthed

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tactics used by cable operators that include refusal to quote rates, lengthy applications, non-refundable deposits, phone evasion, and lies about available space, says Grosfeld.

Videomaker has since created the *Leased Access Report*, a newsletter aimed to help fight for the right to get independent video works on the air. The monthly report lists addresses of leased access networks that are soliciting videotapes and also provides direction on complaining to the FCC about cable operators who are not abiding by the Cable Act's regulations.

Independent TV producers interested in *Videomaker*'s leased access network can send their videotapes to John Grosfeld at Box 4591, Chico, CA 95926, or call (916) 891-8410 for rates and an information kit.

B. J. SIGESMUND

B.J. Sigesmund is a freelance film and video writer.

PACIFIC FILM *SCAM?*

In recent months, many members of the San Francisco-based Film Arts Foundation (FAF) and members of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) were mailed a blue and white form announcing a call for entries for the Pacific Film Festival in San Francisco. The form lists 158 separate categories, including film, video, multimedia, and screenwriting. Entry fees range from a low of $45 (for a script) to a high of $147 (for a film or video over 60 minutes). The dates of the festival are listed as November 30 through December 4, 1994. At first glance, the mailer appears to be a rather generic festival form, but a closer examination reveals some irregularities that may cause makers to think twice before submitting work.

Important information is omitted from the document, including a contact person (festival director or others); judge and jury procedure; insurance for applicants' materials; venues for screenings during festival dates; and any phone or fax numbers. The address given for the festival is a private mail drop on Cole Street in San Francisco. The form instructed that checks be made payable to the Pacific Film Festival and, as was later learned by *The Independent*, a bank account existed into which such checks could be deposited or cashed. A search in the Recorder's Office at City Hall revealed that a business name had been applied for in December 1993 by an individual named Fred Frank of 1280 Lombard Street, #106, San Francisco, whose phone number is (415) 921-0822.

Numerous attempts to reach Frank did eventually prove fruitful. When asked who was supporting the festival, he claimed the

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enterprise was being financed by two Asian film organizations, which he declined to name. When asked about the festival venue, Frank said he had a fear about the quality of the entries, and therefore was not making a commitment as to where or how the films would be exhibited. He proposed Fort Mason as a possible venue, but stated that he could always rent a high school gymnasium somewhere to fulfill his obligations. Although Frank's flyer described no prizes for winners, cash or otherwise, he indicated he was in favor of "creative prizes," an example of which he described as introducing winners to Hollywood agents or producers. As to who would insure the works submitted to the festival, Frank said he thought the works were covered by his personal Aetna policy.

During the first of two conversations, Frank also said he was in the process of applying for nonprofit status, but that a board of directors was already in place. He, however, declined to name any, but said there were two local board members, his wife, Jacqueline, and a lawyer named Chris Hunt. When contacted, Hunt said he was a friend of Fred Frank and that he had attended law school, but had not yet been admitted to the state Bar. He added that he was unaware of ever having been named to the Pacific Film Festival's board of directors.

Since the discussions with Frank made clear that the festival has no established judging criteria, no venue for exhibition, no known structure or board, no acknowledged source of financial support, and no provisions for the proper care or return of entries, makers who have considered submitting materials may want to think again.

HENRY S. ROSENTHAL

Henry S. Rosenthal is a producer living in San Francisco.

FED EX BLOCKS FILMS FROM ENTERING JAPAN

A recent incident in which two 3/4" videotapes were reportedly seized by Japanese customs yielded not so much insight into Japan's notoriously stringent censorship laws as some surprising information about the practices of a well-known airfreight carrier. In December, the videos *Token of Love*, by Chicago-based filmmaker H.D. Motyl, and *To Ride a Cow*, by West Coast filmmaker Quentin Lee, were en route to the Tokyo Lesbian and Gay Film Festival when Motyl was informed by Frameline in San Francisco, curator of the program in which his film was to appear, that the film would be barred from entry due to a brief, non-erotic sequence in which one of the film's two male characters

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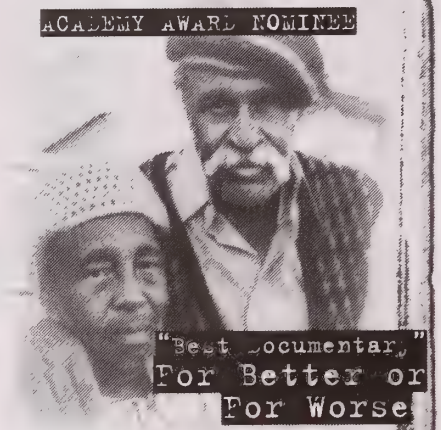


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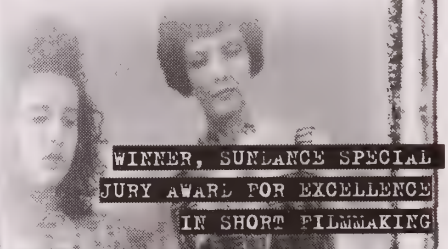
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steps out of a shower and is filmed in the nude. With a certain sense of pride, Motyl issued a press release bearing the headline "Banned in Japan!" In a phone interview, he speculated that customs officials may have taken a more careful look than usual at work bound for the lesbian and gay fest.

However, Mark Finch of Frameline takes a more resigned attitude toward Japan's strictly enforced policy against pubic hair and genitalia on the screen. Despite the sense in the West that Japan is easing up on nudity and is more open to films with homosexual themes, heralded by the release of such gay-themed Japanese films as *Okoge* and *Twinkle*, Finch points out that there has been no official change of policy, and the festival cannot legally exhibit work with even a glimpse of pubic hair. Even the combined power of Disney and Miramax could not bring about an uncensored exhibition of *The Crying Game*'s pivotal scene last fall, although a hot nationwide debate resulted.

The real news, according to Finch, is the manner in which the two tapes were prevented from entering the country. When Finch was informed by his shipper, Federal Express, that nudity in *Token of Love* and *To Ride a Cow* violated Japanese laws, he learned that the return shipping cost for the two tapes would be $200. Exploring alternatives, Finch was told that Federal Express would destroy the tapes at no charge. Finch asked the carrier to issue a certificate of destruction and was further informed that there would be a significant charge for the service, at which point he threw in the towel and agreed to undocumented destruction.

Upon discussing the incident with personnel at the Tokyo Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Finch discovered that Japanese customs agents probably had never seen the tapes. Festival program coordinator John Storey told Finch that the Japanese government, to ease its workload, has had a long-standing practice of hiring Federal Express to perform customs inspection on its behalf.

Finch is less perturbed about what happened than the way it happened. He comments: "It's one thing when customs officials enforce their own local laws, and another when your shipper not only transports the films, but inspects them, enforces the laws, and ultimately destroys the work as well. Filmmakers may want to think about that."



Quentin Lee's *To Ride a Cow* never made it to the Tokyo Lesbian and Gay Film Festival because it showed pubic hair. To the filmmaker's surprise, it was Fed Ex that was enforcing the law. Courtesy filmmaker

BARBARA SCHARRES

Barbara Scharres is director of the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a freelance writer.

ERRATA

The interactive production *Sex Gets Serious*, discussed in "Intimate Interactivity" [Jan./Feb. 1994], was miscredited. It was produced by Jubliee Arts for the Sandwell Health Authority in Birmingham, England.

In the March issue, the captions on p. 44 and 45 were flipped. The photo on p. 30 was from *The Kiss*, starring and directed by Philip Kan Gotanda, courtesy NAATA.

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Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould

francois girard
WRITER/DIRECTOR

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

In the distance, where the chill grey sky touches the barren tundra, a solitary figure strides towards the camera. From beneath the whistling wind the sound of a piano emerges. It's playing the gentle aria with which J.S. Bach begins his monumental Goldberg Variations. To pianists, the recording is instantly recognizable: it's Glenn Gould's dazzling 1955 recording for CBS, the one that catapulted the Canadian pianist into the international arena and launched his career as one of this century's most brilliant, eccentric, reclusive, and worshipped musicians.

To French-Canadian Francois Girard, director of *Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould*, Bach's theme-and-variation structure seemed the perfect approach for a film about Gould. "You don't want to put a complex mind into a box. The idea of fragmenting the subject into many different cells came from this, and the number 32 came from the Goldberg Variations," explains Girard, 31, sipping coffee early one morning at the Sundance Film Festival, where this film, his second feature, played in the Premiere section. "My biggest fear was being reductive," he continues. "With the mosaic structure, you place things at the limits of his genius and show the range without trying to contain the whole thing."

Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould opens in New York and Los Angeles in April, timed to coincide with a peculiar anniversary. Thirty years ago this month, Gould abruptly retired from the concert stage at age 32. From then until his untimely death at age 50, he never again performed in public, but, from within the hermetic confines of the recording studio, grew into a living legend.

Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould has led something of a charmed life since its premiere at the 1993 Venice film festival. Shown last fall at the international film festival in Toronto—Gould's home town—it received critical raves and offers from four distributors (US rights were snatched up by Samuel Goldwyn). The film then went on to the Montreal Film Festival, more raves, a Canadian theatrical release, solid audiences, and four Genie Awards, Canada's Academy-equivalent. "That's the perfect build-up," Girard beams.

Toronto was the true test. "I thought we'd be nailed to the wall by his fans, who are so protective" says Girard, who has received numerous letters from Gould "experts" contesting and clarifying details in the film. "There are Glenn Gould societies all over the world. These people look at this film with a magnifying glass and try to find the mistakes." To his relief, "Mostly, the fans were pleased."

Girard, who produced video art and music videos earlier in his career, set up some interesting challenges for himself with this $1.4 million feature. Unlike most documentary bio-pix, there's not one photo or film clip of the artist. Instead, Gould is played by Canadian stage actor Colm Feore. Second, contrary to convention in dramatic films about musicians, Feore never once sits at a piano, let alone tries to imitate Gould's idiosyncratic, hunched posture. Third, there are virtually no cuts or fades in the music; the movements are played in their entirety. "The film fits the music, not vice versa. We adjusted the text, the shooting, the editing, whatever, to fit the structure of the music," says Girard.



Director Francois Girard (right) discusses a scene with Colm Feore, who portrays the eccentric and brilliant pianist Glenn Gould.
Courtesy Samuel Goldwyn Company

Part of the pleasure of watching *Thirty-two Short Films* is Girard's endless inventiveness in presenting the music. It's rarely just backdrop. The music is either integral to the narrative (as in a charming scene set in a Hamburg hotel, where Gould encourages his chambermaid to listen for a moment to his recording of a Beethoven sonata—one of several vignettes showing Gould's affection for "regular" folks); or it's there for it's own sake (as in the next scene, in which a brief, thundering Beethoven variation is visualized through an optical sound print); or it sets the scene's tone perfectly (like the wild Schoenberg gigue that accompanies Gould's diary of pill-popping and blood pressure readings, set against actual X-ray films of a skeletal figure at the piano).

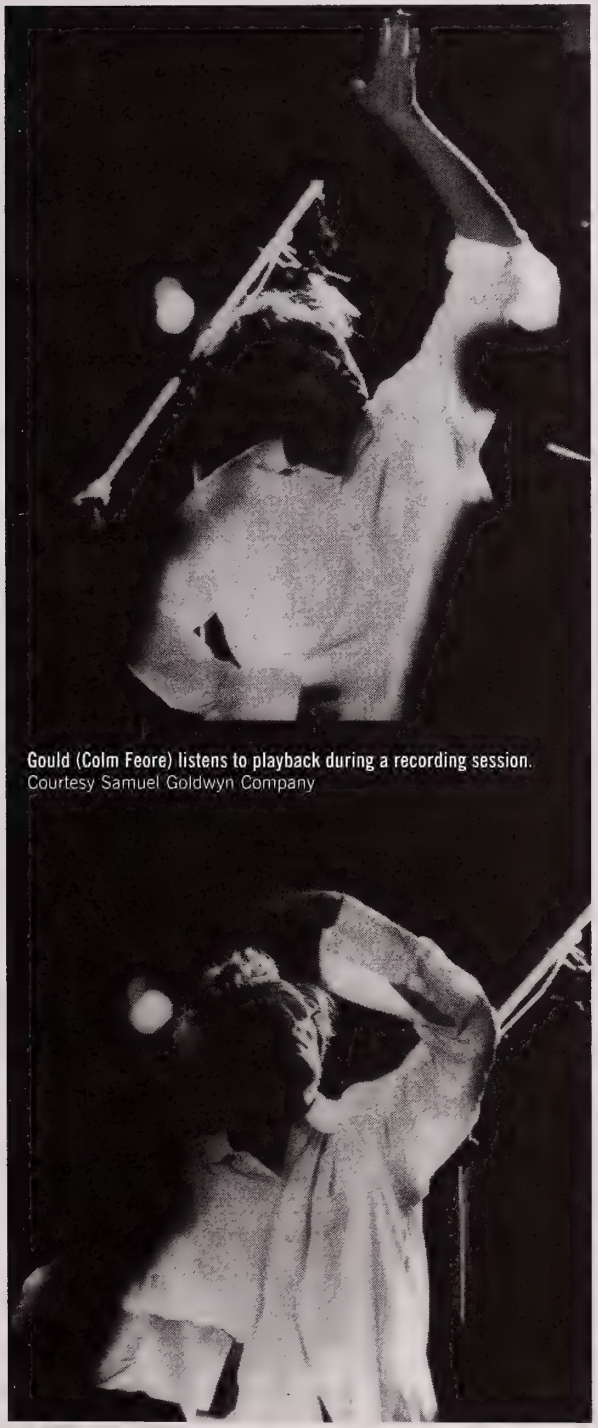
"Some ideas were right at the start, and some kept changing," says Girard. One of the toughest sections to film, he recalls, was "Practice." In this scene, Gould, on a concert tour, enters a practice room. But rather than sit down at the piano, he restlessly circles the room in a musical reverie. "I had to show a pianist not playing the piano," says the director of his predicament. "Gould never rehearsed. He'd walk around his apartment with a score in his hand... then his first rehearsal was made with a tape turning [in the recording studio]. Gould wasn't interested in the sound of the piano. His sound is quite ordinary. He was representing *ideas*. He was a thinker and represented music at its most pure level. The movement shows it was not about the act of playing the piano."

Girard adds that the piece in this scene—Beethoven's Tempest sonata—was written when the composer was deaf and, like Gould, tussled with the music in his head.

Girard's ultimate challenge was Gould's extraordinarily prolific output. The pianist's archives contain no less than 6,000 letters, 110 hours of recorded music, plus personal diaries, interviews, articles, TV programs, and the CBC radio documentaries that Gould produced. "The fun part was going through the books, the records, and hunt for anything that could make a short film," recalls Girard. "I was like a little boy in a candy shop, trying to fill my pockets." He and cowriter Don McKellar initially sketched out about 60 scenes, then whittled them down to 32, changing segments up to the last minute. "The hardest part was trying to build a continuity," says Girard. This dramatic arc is key to the film's strength. "There is an introduction, then you

introduce your character, you move into the intrigue, you present this subject and that, and then you have a dramatic ending. And parallel with that, you have content continuity and music continuity."

Girard, a self-taught pianist, came to his subject with a cursory knowledge of Gould's life and music. His producer, Niv Fichman, was on the other hand a die-hard Gould fan. Fichman and partners Barbara Willis-Sweete and Larry Weinstein (all former New York University film students) formed their company, Rhombus Media, in 1979 in order to produce films about music. Back in Toronto, Gould was very much on their minds. Sweete, in fact, had a job working at Gould's hotel, the Hampton Court, and one night spotted the pianist heaving a garbage bag into his Lincoln Continental at 2:00 a.m. The obsessed group followed him as he drove for a half-hour before disposing of his cargo at a remote bus shelter. They, of course, went through his garbage and found only a bagful of grapefruit peels and old newspapers.



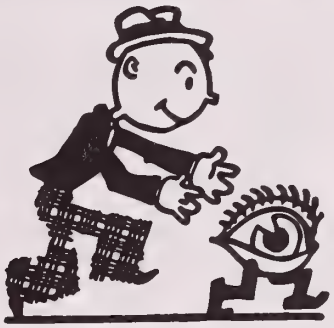
Gould (Colm Feore) listens to playback during a recording session.
Courtesy Samuel Goldwyn Company

Thirty-two Short Films came about after Girard and Fichman worked together on the Emmy-award winning film *Le Dortoir*, and Girard suggested doing something on Gould. "First I wanted to do a play," recalls the director, who had been approached about writing and directing something for the stage. "I thought that the Glenn Gould interviews would be a good subject. Then I started to read his interviews. Ten days later, after reading through the whole thing, I understood there was a film there and rushed to Toronto to talk to Niv." Unlike the Rhombus producers, who, as Toronto residents, grew up with a Glenn Gould photo in their classroom and a view of him as a national hero, Montreal-born Girard was less awestruck. "I had that French-Canadian distance," he says. "I got into the subject without these filters and wasn't scared by any preconceptions."

The year ahead for Girard should be quieter, once he winds up a concert film about Peter Gabriel which the rock star asked him to shoot. Girard is in the unusual position of having time off because he cancelled his next dramatic feature, which was fully funded and about to roll. But Girard decided that the subject—a female concert pianist—was the wrong thing to follow *Thirty-two Short Films*. "She just died, suffocated by Glenn Gould," he explains. Now with some money in pocket, Girard plans to take off a year in order "to read a little bit, walk my dog, and write."

But he's not there yet. There's still the promotion of *Thirty-two Short Films* to attend to. Trudging through the snow as we leave the coffee shop, Girard says that he's already done "hundreds" of interviews. "When it's about your fiction work, you get bored with the same old questions and talking about yourself." But with *Thirty-two Short Films*, he confesses, "I just divert the questions back to Gould. And I *never* get tired of talking about him."

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.



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NO-BUDGET PRODUCER

BY DAVID BARKER

As a producer of what he calls "no-budget art films" by directors like Jon Jost, Bruce Connor, Jon Moritsugu, and Caveh Zahedi, San Francisco-based Henry S. Rosenthal finds himself something of an outsider in the film community, even among independents. "There's a tremendous resistance to art films that are not mass market consumable items," he states. "I have been reviled, insulted, and publicly humiliated for the work that I've done. I've been told that the films I produce are harmful to the film industry, that they represent an investor's worst nightmare of what a film can be, and that they will drive independent capital out of the film industry."



Courtesy Henry S. Rosenthal

For the past six years, Rosenthal, 38, has worked primarily with veteran filmmaker Jon Jost, whom he credits with his conversion to a no-budget aesthetic. Rosenthal was already an experienced producer when he met Jost and was four years into producing avant-garde legend Bruce Connor's first feature film, *The Soul Stirrers: By and By* (due for completion in 1994). It was a screening of Jost's 1977 feature *Last Chance for a Slow Dance*, shot and edited on color reversal stock for $3,000, which changed his life: "It just tore my head off my shoulders," Rosenthal recalls. "I came out of the theater and said, 'If you can make that movie for $3,000, I sure would like to work with you.'" This led to a collaboration which has produced five films, including the critically acclaimed *All the Vermeers in New York* for American Playhouse. A recent result of this partnership, *Frameup*, a 35mm color feature budgeted at only $40,000, premiered at last year's Sundance Film Festival. This year's Sundance included Jost's *The Bed You Sleep In*.

As a producer of features with budgets ranging from $15-250,000, Rosenthal is clearly unconventional. "Certainly my role as a producer is very different from that of a Hollywood producer, who sits behind a desk making phone calls. Often I am helping out on set, even doing some of the catering." In fact, he eschews all conventional wisdom about independent production. *All the Vermeers in New York* was shot in New York City completely nonunion, except for SAG, and with no shooting permits, although they used such high visibility locations as the World Trade Center, World Financial Center, and Metropolitan Museum of Art. This was possible, in part, because the film was shot entirely in natural light, one of Rosenthal's favorite cost-cutting tips. "When we needed to go to a location, we would go in a cab, shoot our scenes, and return." He also advises no-budget filmmakers against worrying about rights ("You should be so lucky to have a film that is visible enough to have problems") and against consulting lawyers: "There is no place for lawyers in no budget films. They should not be called. They should not be consulted at any point. That is wasted money, money that doesn't go on the screen."

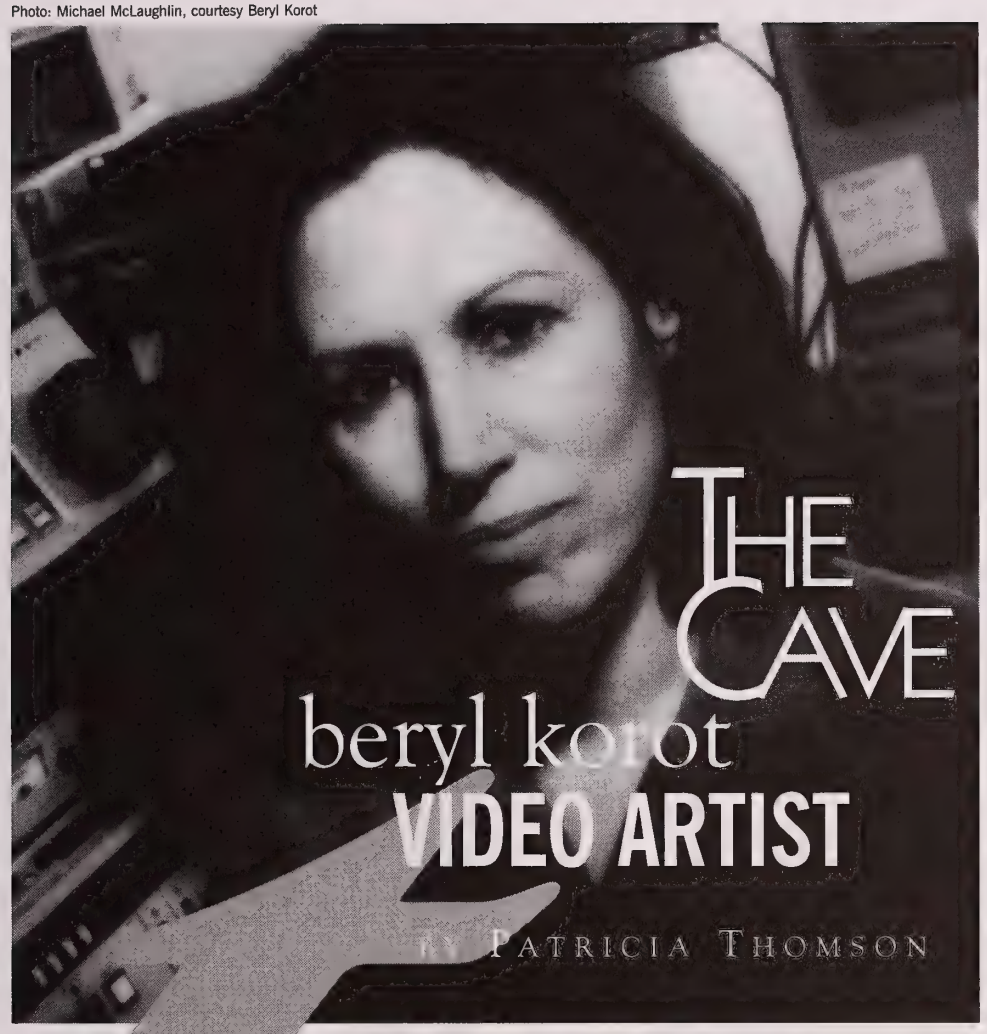
As difficult as production is on this scale, it is distribution and marketing that Rosenthal finds the greatest challenge. This part of filmmaking is "so soul-killing, so heart breaking," he says. Although the filmmaking process ends when the answer print comes out of the lab, "the humiliation that comes after that never ends. This is what drives people mad, literally." *All the Vermeers in New York* is a good example. Jost's first "big budget" film ($250,000) after nearly 30 years of struggle, *Vermeers* won the Los Angeles critics' award for Best Independent Feature, received two thumbs up from Siskel and Ebert, and opened in LA to rave reviews in all seven major papers—on the day of the LA riots. "It was inconceivable, beyond belief. We'd struggled for years for that moment; all the pieces were falling into place. Then something tantamount to an act of God occurred, and the theater was closed." Eventually the theater reopened, but due to curfew played only one matinee a day. "I'll tell you," Rosenthal adds, "the feeling at that time was not conducive to driving across town to see a quirky little art film."

When people come to him for advice about making films, the first thing Rosenthal always says is, "Don't do it." "I can't stress the point too strongly," he explains. "I really feel that most films that are made should not be made, and that the world would be a better place if most of them didn't exist." He also knows it takes a special kind of fortitude to endure the heartbreak bound to occur along the way. "The people I work with are monomaniacs, absolutely driven. If I have any skill as a producer, it is that I have been able to work with people with whom it has been thought impossible to work with; difficult but enlightening."

Rosenthal currently has two projects in postproduction, Jon Moritsugu's feature *Mod Fuck Explosion* and Caveh Zahedi's *I Don't Hate Las Vegas Anymore*, which premiered at Rotterdam in January. He recently had to hire an assistant to deal with the ever-increasing flow of scripts and proposals that come into his office. His company, Complex Corporation, is able to support itself with revenue from sales of earlier films and his original investors have all made their money back or allowed their funds to roll over. Still, Rosenthal remains cynical. "If the measure of a producer is his or her financial success, as I think it must be, then there is no question that I am a failure." Yet he manages to remain faithful to his vision, producing those films that Hollywood refuses to make and having no intention of making it big. "As Sergio Leone said," Rosenthal notes, "'Making a film is hell, but having made a film is wonderful.'"

David Barker is an independent producer and director of education at Film/Video Arts in New York City.

Photo: Michael McLaughlin, courtesy Beryl Korot



THE CAVE

beryl korot VIDEO ARTIST

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

They are described in the Book of Genesis, but might just as well have come from one of the great psychological novels of the nineteenth century. There's Hagar, an Egyptian maid drafted by her employers to be a surrogate mother. But after over-elevating herself within the household hierarchy, Hagar and her son, Ishmael, are ousted by the barren wife, Sarah, who in turn is surprised by a post-menopausal pregnancy. Her husband, Abraham, bravely challenges the pantheistic idol worship of his king. For this offense, he is thrown into a fiery furnace—and survives on faith. Yet Abraham is also capable of lying to save his own skin, telling the Pharaoh's men that his beautiful wife is his sister as she is hauled off. Abraham's pivotal place in history is earned by fathering two sons—Ishmael, a warrior and nomad, and Sarah's obedient son, Isaac—and with them, two faiths: Moslem and Jewish. At Abraham's death, the sons reunite to bury their father in a cave in Hebron, on the West Bank. Today the mosque built on top of the Cave of the Patriarchs remains the only religious site where Jews and Arabs worship side by side. Sadly, it is now also known as the site of the massacre of Arabs by a Jewish settler in February.

Had the story of Abraham been done as an old-fashioned *bel canto* opera, we might have seen singers in striped robes and veils enacting the sacrifice of Isaac or the hardships of Hagar in exile. Instead, *The Cave*, a multichannel video opera by Beryl Korot and composer Steve Reich, offers a small ensemble of singers and musicians positioned on a spare scaffold that also supports the opera's main players: five large video monitors. On them, we see texts and exegesis from the Old Testament, the Midrash Rabbah, the al-Tabari, and the Koran, which supply the narrative backbone. But the heart of *The Cave* lies in the commentary: documentary footage of Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans—scholars, artists, journalists, religious leaders, and regular folk—responding to the questions: Who for you is Abraham? Who for you is Sarah? Hagar? Ishmael? Isaac? The bottom line for Korot and Reich is, Do they still live?

"The questions were like a Rorschach," says Korot. Indeed, the answers speak volumes about different cultures, ages, and religions. "When I think of Hagar, as a black female, I really think of myself," says a young minister from Texas, who proudly notes, "She's the first female that God speaks to." But for an elderly, black, female church leader from Brooklyn, Hagar is "the servant—and of course the servant takes orders." To a Jewish peace activist, the Arab Ishmael is "our relative. He's different. He's our relative." For other Israeli Jews, he is "a fighter." "We see [his children] in the streets." To a Palestinian educator, he justifies their claim to the land: "Ishmael is the oldest and *he's* the inheritant and *we* are the descendant and *that's that*." While *The Cave* as a whole is apolitical, as Korot and Reich have repeatedly claimed, politics seeps in everywhere.

This being a multimedia opera and not a *Frontline* piece, the documentary material is transformed, musically and visually. The interviewees' speech inflections provide the musical motifs: their natural melodic lines are isolated, fragmented, repeated, paralleled by woodwinds and strings, and spun into an intricate rhythmic web. Similarly, the talking heads shots veer toward the abstract as they, too, are repeated across the monitors, with several screens devoted to enlarged details which Korot likens to portraits: Ethiopian fabric, a rainbow-colored sweater, a gate with graceful ironwork. In the second act, details become borders; by the third, the borders are multiplied and animated. By this stage, "It's like pure commentary," explains Korot—a visual metaphor for what's happening in the interviews.

The Cave is Korot's first collaboration with Reich, her husband of 18 years, but it represents a confluence of interests they've shared for years. During the seventies, Korot and Reich started attending classes in Jewish studies. "My grandparents were religious people," recalls Korot, 48, as we sit in her downtown Manhattan loft. "Steve didn't come from that. It was really something we went to as adults." Korot recalls being "astounded" at "how text and commentary are taught in the Jewish tradition: it's like the ultimate in deconstruction....The notion that you take the Old Testament and read it as a bunch of stories is a concept so foreign to Judaism. It's got nothing to do with how a text is studied, which is never alone, always in a dynamic situation with other people, and always with commentaries that span millennia, in order to even begin to crack the code." *The Cave*, she asserts, is "a text and commentary sine qua non."

The Cave also represents Korot's return to video after a nine-year hiatus. During the 1970s, she was one of the pioneers of video art, as well as coeditor of the first magazine devoted to video art, *Radical Software*. From the beginning, Korot was interested in multiple channel work and image/sound sequences on adjoining monitors, realized in such works as *Dachau, 1974* and *Text and Commentary* (1977). During this time, she also began weaving ("The loom is the most ancient tool on earth for learning how to program multiples") and then painting, abandoning video by 1980. "I felt that I had done everything I could with multiples in terms of time, without repeating myself."

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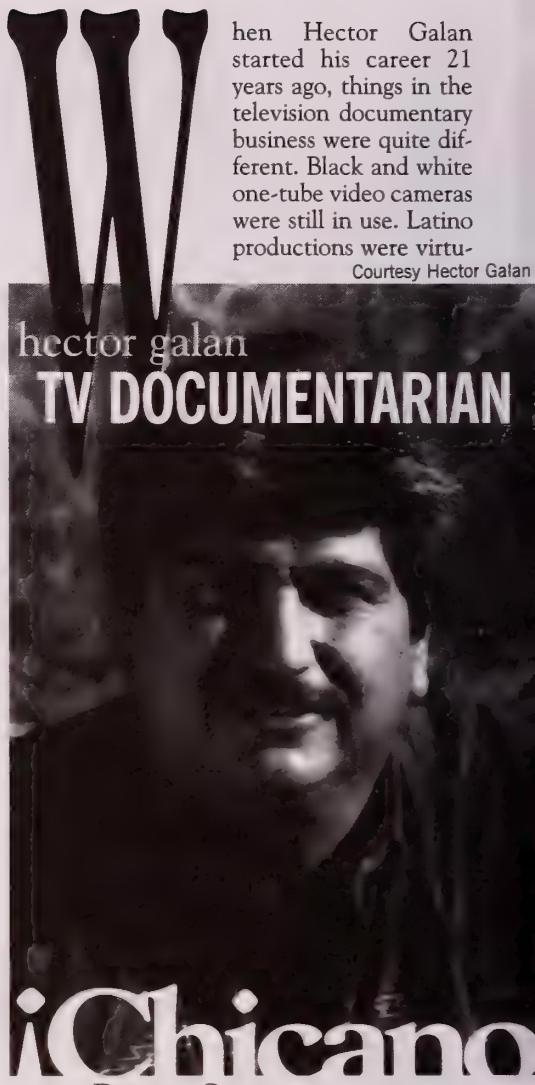
Then came desktop video. Suddenly, video was more than cameras and cuts. The computer made it malleable and almost as tactile as her brushes and loom. Plus, she could edit at home. "I never liked going into studios, because I never liked the clock ticking," Korot says, firmly shaking her head. "I wanted to be able to work every single day and experiment, develop my own techniques, and never have a technician in a studio say to me, 'This is what's available to you.'"

And experiment she did. The three acts of *The Cave*, edited over a period of four years, chart the evolution of computer graphics capabilities and Korot's increasing facility with her software. "When I started, I thought, 'Am I going to have to reshoot the images off the screen?'" Instead, Ben Rubin, technical advisor for *The Cave*, told her about some frame-grab programs just coming out and put her in touch with computer graphics consultant Harry Siegel. "Then, after I finished the first act, I said, 'Harry, I'm getting itchy to try something else. Is there something that will allow me to manipulate the stills?' and he said, 'Yes, try this High Resolution QFX,'" which again was the latest software. "The piece really did *evolve* in that sense," says Korot. By the end, she knew her software so intimately that she could tweak it to create the illusion of movement without an animation program.

Computers weren't the only new challenge. "The idea of taking a video installation format and blowing it up to fill a stage—that was an act of faith," Korot admits. Now she faces the opposite challenge as she contemplates a single-channel version, which could potentially find its way onto television. That's clearly the best shot at getting the work widely seen in the U.S., which has always been relatively inhospitable to video installations and large-scale performance works. *The Cave* is no exception: In Europe, it has been staged in Vienna, Berlin, Holland, London, Paris, and Brussels. In the United States, it had one booking, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music last fall. In addition, the scaled down version—a video installation with musicians on tape—was shown at the Whitney Museum. Not surprisingly, Korot is focusing her fundraising efforts on European sources.

The Cave has yet to be shown in the Middle East, though there's been great interest. "Things are too volatile there," Korot explains. "You have Muslim fundamentalists who might be absolutely outraged that the Koran or the mosque is presented within the context of a music theater work." For secularized Americans, on the other hand, it's *The Cave*'s religious history that stands out. On leaving a screening at the Whitney, one Jewish man remarked to his friend, "I feel like I just packed in three years of Sundays." But, far from being a stultifying Sunday-school experience, *The Cave* sweeps one along with its exhilarating music, compelling characters, and telescoping of ancient and modern. As Korot says, "It goes down like a drink of water."

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.



Courtesy Hector Galan

¡Chicano!

BY RAY SANTISTEBAN

When Hector Galan started his career 21 years ago, things in the television documentary business were quite different. Black and white one-tube video cameras were still in use. Latino productions were virtually nonexistent. At that time, Galan recalls, "It was innovative just to have a Chicano's voice on the air." Now in mid-career, Galan, 40, is one of the top Latino producers, having completed 10 projects for the PBS documentary series *Frontline* and nearly a dozen other nationally aired television programs, including *The Hunt for Pancho Villa*, broadcast November 3rd, 1993 on *American Experience*. Most recently, Galan was named series producer for *¡Chicano!*, an eight-part PBS series that may do for the Mexican American civil rights movement what *Eyes on the Prize* did for the history of Black civil rights.

It was while growing up in San Angelo, Texas, that Galan first became interested in media. Originally wanting to become a radio deejay, he unexpectedly was hired to do camera at the local CBS affiliate. Galan was quickly hooked. "I got the bug and knew I wanted to be a TV director," he recalls. Galan got his chance at age 20. While still in college, he began directing nightly news at the NBC affiliate in Lubbock, Texas.

In the 1970s Galan became active in the Chicano movement, eventually joining the student activist group MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán). At this point his burgeoning career underwent a

change. "I started to learn more about who I was—my identity as a Chicano—and I started to think about what I could do in television to bring more of these stories to the people." Combining his work as an activist with his knowledge of video production, Galan, now fresh out of school, created a weekly news and public affairs program, *Aztlán*, for KTXT also in Lubbock Texas. In its two-year run the program covered poetry, music, and political issues of interest to what was then known as "El Movimiento."

Soon afterwards, Galan entered the national arena. Hired in 1980 as an associate producer on *Checking It Out*, a 26-part series on Latino teenagers for Austin's Southwest Center for Educational Television, he soon became senior producer of the entire series. Its success lay the foundation for a quick succession of other projects helmed by Galan.

Since then, Galan's work has covered a wide spectrum of subjects, from college athletics (*Chasing the Basketball Dream*, 1984) to the dynamics of race relations in the military (*The Color of Your Skin*, 1991). Most recently he completed *The Hunt for Pancho Villa*, a film on Pancho Villa's 1916 attack on Columbus, New Mexico, and the failure of General John J. Pershing to capture him.

Whether as a staff producer or as head of Galan Productions, Inc., his Austin-based company established in 1984, Galan has continued to produce projects that deal with issues of concern to the Latino community. "I try to walk a careful line," Galan admits, "because people love to pigeon hole you and say, 'That's what that producer is going to do.' I'm totally against that; I like to do everything. But I have a love and special interest in doing programming with themes that are Latino. I've done projects like *Vaquero* (on Mexican American cowboys) and *Los Mineros* (about Mexican American copper miners and their struggle for equality), but, at the same time, the last *Frontline* I did was on then Arkansas Governor Clinton's record on child welfare."

With his latest project, Galan's work has in many ways come full circle. He is currently producing a film called *Songs from the Homeland*, which will explore the Tex Mex music that attracted him to the idea of becoming a deejay. In addition, there's his work on *¡Chicano!* This series, a coproduction of the National Latino Communications Center and KCET/Los Angeles, will examine the Mexican American civil rights movement which he actively participated in during his youth.

"What's funny and jarring to me is that we're doing this as history, and I'm thinking, 'My god! How old am I?'" But given this country's short memory, Galan believes there is a strong need for the series. "The Chicano movement had an enormous social and political impact on the nation as a whole," Galan says. "Americans, like the younger generations of Mexican American people in general, don't really understand our history or the impact of what transpired during that time."

After years of working exclusively in documentary, Galan is still committed to this film form. "People always ask me, 'Don't you ever want to do a feature?' or 'Aren't you tired of doing documentaries?' You know, I'm not. I've had the opportunity to move into other areas of network programming—some of the magazine shows and so on—but I'm going to keep doing this. I still think there a lot of stories that need to be told."

Ray Santisteban is a New York-based independent producer and freelance writer.

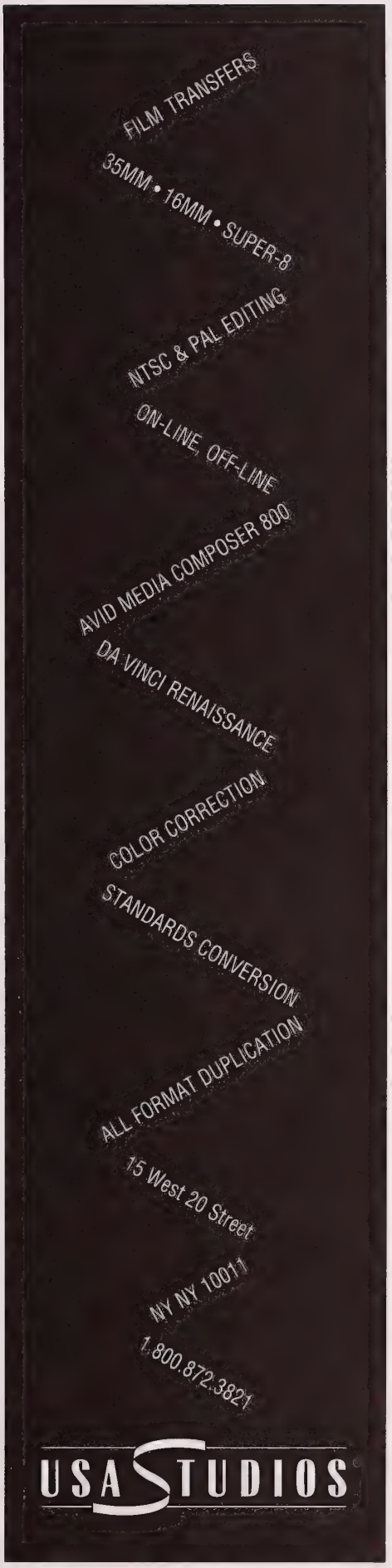
christopher leo daniels & k. brent hill
DIRECTOR & PRODUCER

BY YVONNE WELBON

With activists lobbying in Washington to lift the ban on gays and lesbians in the military, the work of director-producer team Christopher Leo Daniels and K. Brent Hill is especially timely. In their 30-minute short Victor, they examine the life of a black soldier who happens to be gay. Not a documentary, Victor tackles the issues obliquely, using a lush, lyrical, experimental style that has netted the filmmakers numerous awards on the festival circuit.

Victor

The idea for the black-and-white short was sparked by television coverage of the Persian Gulf war. While watching *Nightline*, Daniels and Hill began scripting the narrative. "*Victor* is about a number of things," Hill says. "It is obviously about the disenfranchisement of blacks and gays. It is also about going to fight in another country and killing in the



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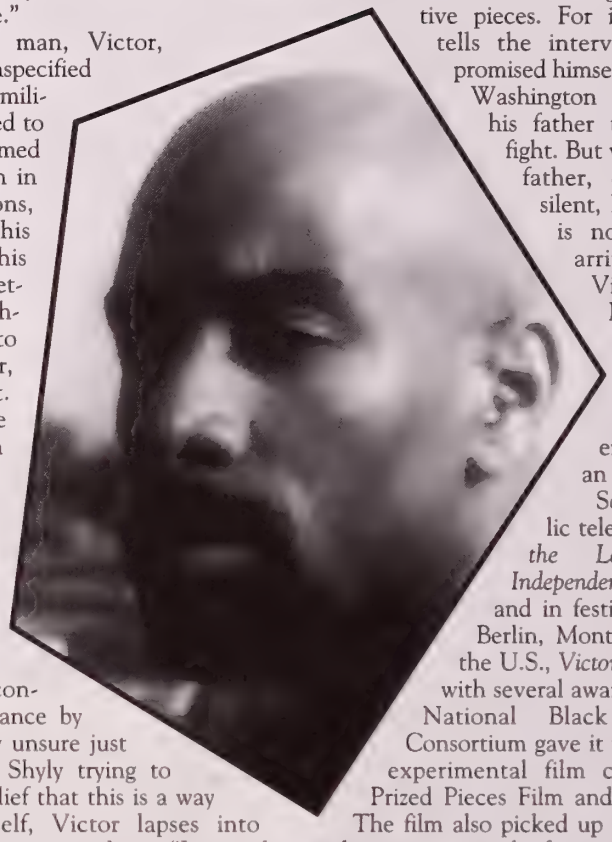
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name of democracy. It's about how little we value human life."

The leading man, Victor, serves in an unspecified branch of the military. When called to fight in an unnamed war, he is awash in mixed emotions, mulling over his future with his boyfriend and setting out for Washington, DC, to talk to his father, a Vietnam vet. These scenes are intercut with Victor being interviewed by anonymous, lab-coated researchers. Asked why he wants to serve in the military, Victor (in a convincing performance by Hill) is painfully unsure just why he joined. Shyly trying to articulate his belief that this is a way to better himself, Victor lapses into Armed Forces recruitment lingo: "I wanted to be all that I could be...," he shrugs, his voice trailing off.

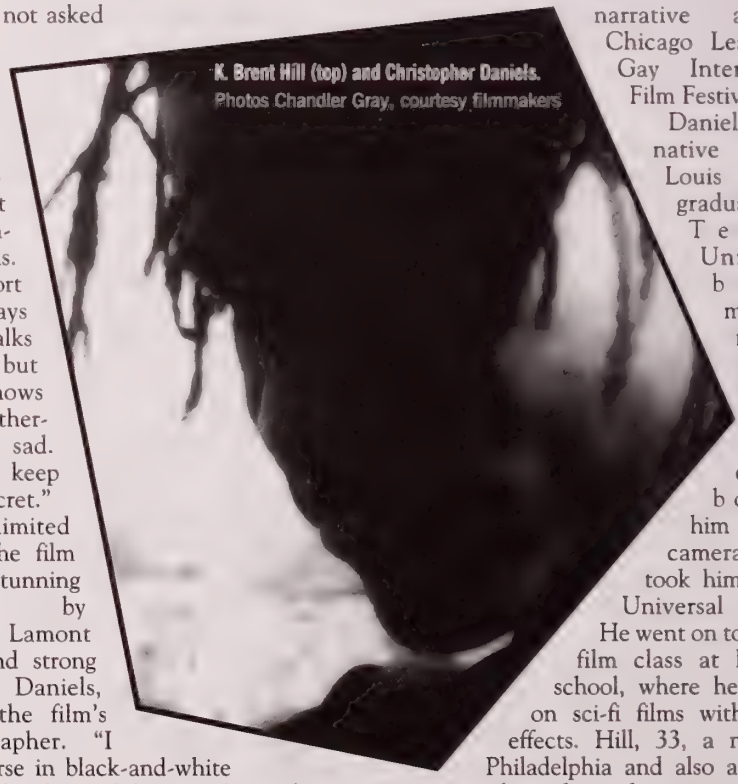


"We are not asked to identify with Victor as much as we are asked to look at him," Daniels explains. "The film sort of betrays him. He talks tough, but footage shows him to be otherwise. He's sad. He has to keep his lover secret."

With limited dialogue, the film relies on a stunning soundtrack by Wayman Lamont Widgins and strong visuals by Daniels, who was the film's cinematographer. "I took a course in black-and-white painting and a charcoal drawing class to learn to see in black and white," recalls Daniels. "I wanted to learn how to separate things without using color. I purposely used a lot of high contrast lighting to heighten the tension in the film."

With little traditional exposition, the viewer is left to stitch together the narrative pieces. For instance, Victor tells the interviewers that he promised himself he would go to Washington to discuss with his father the decision to fight. But we never see the father, except in old, silent, home movies. It is not until Victor arrives at the Vietnam War Memorial that we realize this will be their meeting place—his father is a casualty of an earlier war.

Screened on public television's *Through the Lens III* and *Independent Images* series and in festivals in London, Berlin, Montreal, and across the U.S., *Victor* has come away with several awards. In 1993, the National Black Programming Consortium gave it first place in the experimental film category at the Prized Pieces Film and Video Festival. The film also picked up an experimental dramatic award from the Baltimore Independent Film & Video Makers competition and an award for narrative at the Chicago Lesbian & Gay International Film Festival.



K. Brent Hill (top) and Christopher Daniels.
Photos Chandler Gray, courtesy filmmakers

Daniels, 30, a native of St. Louis and a graduate of Temple University, began making films at age 11 when his mother bought him a movie camera and took him to visit Universal Studios. He went on to create a film class at his high school, where he focused on sci-fi films with special effects. Hill, 33, a native of Philadelphia and also a Temple graduate, began his artistic career as an actor in elementary school. Also given a movie camera as a child, Hill, unlike Daniels, focused most of his attention on theater. He began his stage career as a child with Society Hill Playhouse in Philadelphia and has continued acting. A mutual friend,

aware of Hill's interest in acting and Daniel's interest in filmmaking, introduced them while they were students at Temple.

One of their first collaborations was a stage play written and directed by Daniels called *The Day*. Staged by the Avalanche Multiethnic Lesbian and Gay Theater Group for the Arts for AIDS Festival '90, Daniels and Hill co-starred in the one-act play about the day a cure for AIDS is found. This successful collaboration led them to begin production on *Victor*.

Both men are now involved in freelance projects including music videos, television commercials, and film and video productions. Hill is in postproduction on a video project called *Eight Ball*, a love story about HIV, disclosure, rejection, and unrequited love. Daniels is working with Hill again, this time as an actor on *Eight Ball*.

"[Videomaker] Cheryl Dunye gave us the inspiration," says Hill about *Victor*, his first coproduction with Daniels. "We had both worked on a couple of her projects. Watching her, we realized that if we wanted to make a film, all we needed to have is a dream and some talent."

Yvonne Welbon is a writer and filmmaker who lives in Chicago.

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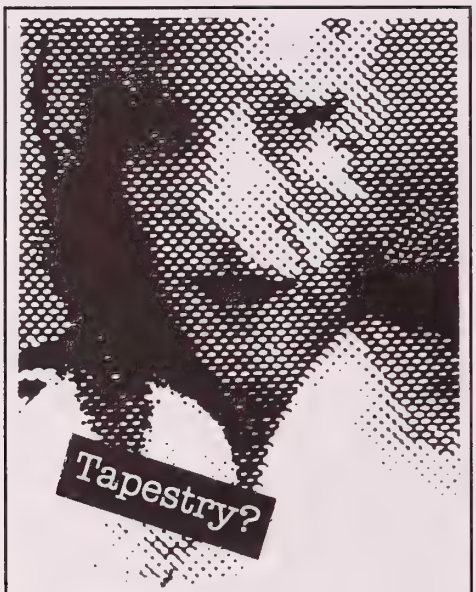
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roberto arevalo
MEDIA EDUCATOR

BY JASON GREGORICUS

Teenage filmmakers have a distinct edge over professionals, says Roberto Arevalo, head of the Somerville, Massachusetts-based Mirror Project. They have not yet been influenced by established conventions. "One of the things I've learned is that adults tend to run away from what they are," he says, "where[as] teenagers and youth are more in touch with who they are and express that openly."

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The Mirror PROJECT

Roberto Arevalo (center) with Mirror Project students Anderson St. Louis and Margarita Garcia.
Courtesy the Mirror Project



The Mirror Project is about as close as one can get to grassroots mediamaking. A program of Somerville Community Access Television, located outside of Boston, the Mirror Project teaches 11-to 16-year-olds how to produce their own video documentaries. In its short year-and-a-half existence, the program's young producers have received more accolades than most mediamakers could hope to collect in a lifetime.

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Last May, Mirror Project teens beat out 262 adult filmmakers and won three Outstanding Public Access Program awards at the New England Film and Video Festival: *Savages*, by former gang member Efraim Bautista, had children reenacting scenes of urban gang life, including a shooting and a police raid. Lenny Fuentes' *Hoops* dramatized the intensity of an inner-city basketball game, and Patricia Vallardes' *Twins* depicted the everyday problems of twin sisters. In 1992, Chicago's Women in the Director's Chair Festival recognized 14-year-old Natalia Velez for her inventive use of voiceover in her short *Mr. Friend*, giving her their Emerging New Producer award. Last fall, Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art hired Velez and Bautista to help videotape *Young, Black, and Malcolm X*, an urban perspective piece exploring contemporary teens' attitudes toward the black Muslim leader. In January, 13 year-old Mirror graduate Anderson St. Louis won the Alliance for Community Media's national competition with his short *Living Large*, which features a hyper-confident monologue by his cousin. *Living Large* has been selected to represent the U.S. in the upcoming international Olympiad of Local Video and TV Creation in Copenhagen.

Arevalo, 35, built the program from scratch when hired by Somerville Community Access Television in 1992. "My role," he says, "is simply to show the kids that what they have to say is important."

Born in Colombia, Arevalo emigrated to the U.S. at age 22. After getting his General Equivalence Diploma, he majored in Media Communications at Hunter College in Manhattan while working nights in a restaurant. Early on he realized video technology was a potent tool for expression and self-assertion. Arevalo began chronicling his own life and that of other immigrants, finding that "real life" was as important as the classroom. "I learned more about sociology when I was working with Haitians, Africans, and Americans as a dishwasher," he notes.

A documentary on a local maker of *arepas* (cornmeal patties, a Colombian specialty) landed Arevalo a job at the Spanish-language cable station Tele-Colombia in Queens. He spent a year videotaping *Los Colombianitos*, a news show depicting the everyday lives of the Colombian community. In the summer of 1992 Arevalo moved to Boston.

In many ways the Mirror Project reflects Arevalo's egalitarian training. Taking advantage of Somerville's ethnically diverse community, Arevalo chooses eight young protegés from a slew of applicants. The four-month course consists of training the students in the rudiments of videomaking, then simply letting them go to work on projects.

Part of the program's uniqueness resides in its hands-off methodology. Whereas many mediamaking classes emphasize teaching through instruction and example, Arevalo stresses self-teaching. "I feel it's unfair for a teenager to get away from what he or she has to deal with, and try to imitate public television," he says, "because that's not what they're

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about." Placing heavy emphasis upon their own experiences and intuitive abilities, the teens learn simply by watching and critiquing previous projects. These critiques then become the foundation for their own videos.

Despite their beginner's status, the videomakers often touch on meaty issues, including racism, teen pregnancy, and inner city violence. As the videos are usually slice-of-life vignettes, they often underscore for their young audiences the commonality of experience, regardless of socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic gaps. As Arevalo says, "The Mirror Project is not just a video training program for teenagers... [It] is a movement that is promoting dialogue between people."

The result is not only self-awareness, but powerful and entertaining videos. "One of the things that really inspires me is the way teenagers show what they think without any barriers. Their spontaneity and sincerity can be very touching," he says. "Teenagers show what is happening in their lives, and the result is that they're recording a history that doesn't have anything to do with the academic world, the so-called experts."

It is recognition from experts, however, that is currently occupying him. Although the next batch of eight videos are due to be viewed on May 20, Arevalo is making plans to attend the video Olympiad in Copenhagen earlier that month. Yet, even with success hampering some production, Arevalo's energy and enthusiasm remain undaunted. He attributes this to working with the kids. "When you have respect and learn from the youth," he says, "then you feel younger all the time."

Jason Gregoricus is a freelance writer/journalist currently living in the Boston area.

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BREAKING THRU

New in '94: UCLA grad John Zhang's low-budget crosscultural drama *Consuming Sun* tells the story of Chinese writer Mai Kepo, whose love for Japanese culture results in trouble during the Sino-Japanese war.
Courtesy filmmaker

BERENICE REYNAUD

Asian American Media Hits Its Stride

Once a "model minority," ie., silent and well-assimilated, Asian Americans are becoming more visible. The last 20 years have witnessed a large array of independent films and videos that were produced, distributed, and exhibited through grassroots Asian American organizations and media centers. Increasingly, such works have left the "margins" to flirt with the mainstream. Thanks to a network that includes community-based Asian American film events as well as international film festivals, Asian films are no longer reserved for an elite of specialists, but are reaching wider and wider audiences.

In the industry, everything is gauged in terms of box-office, and, if Asian subjects, directors, and actors are hot in Hollywood these days, it is because they bring in big bucks. Talent agencies that have signed on John Lone and Joan Chen are now cashing in, and both actors have been successful in roles that were initially "color blind" (*The Moderns* for Lone, *Twin Peaks* for Chen). A turning point was reached when cult director John Woo, who had his own production company in Hong Kong, signed on with Universal to direct *Hard Target*. Woo's first experience with the studio system (in a package deal that included Jean-Claude Van Damme as the lead, a script he had not written, a slightly unrealistic budget, countless re-editing sessions, and a reshoot) was not entirely happy, but the film made money, which means that Woo is now "bankable" in Hollywood. Meanwhile, as some veteran Asian American directors are successfully bringing their stories to multiplex audiences, a younger generation of independents is busy exploring different paths.

Clearly, 1993 was the breakthrough for Asian American films, capped by the commercial success of Wayne Wang's *The Joy Luck Club*. The film's overwhelming popularity—it has grossed more than $30 million—was somewhat of a surprise. Granted, Amy Tan's novel had been on the *New York Times*' best-seller list for months, but rumor had it that the intertwining stories of eight mothers and daughters in feudal Mainland China and contemporary San Francisco were too complex to bring to the screen.



"I read the book in 1989," says Wang. "I was seduced by the details, how the dialogue sounded and the characters related to each other, which reflected my own Chinese-American immigrant experience and my relationship to my parents. And the story had an ironic tone that transcended melodrama.

"I met Amy Tan in San Francisco, and we took [the project] around. Eventually Ronald Bass [Academy Award-winning screenwriter of *Rain Man*] joined in and wrote the screenplay with Amy, but it took us about three years to get the film produced."

Hollywood executives were skeptical: Wang had an international reputation as an arthouse director (with such films as *Dim Sum*, 1984, and *Eat a Bowl of Tea*, 1989). His latest feature, however, the ferocious, surreal, *noir* thriller *Life Is Cheap, but Toilet Paper Is Expensive* (1990), had failed to meet with box-office success and was deemed too "experimental." Moreover, it was said that "there were not enough good English-speaking Asian actresses" to cast the major parts in *The Joy Luck Club*, a cliché Wang finds demeaning: "There are a lot of strong actresses here; what was difficult was to find the right ones. We had casting calls in Los Angeles, New York, throughout the United States, and in China."

Showing the protagonists at different moments in their lives, the film featured nearly 30 Mandarin-speaking roles. The cast that Wang put together demonstrates the richness of the acting range available in the Asian American community. Relative newcomers like Ming-Na Wen, Tamlyn Tomita, and Lauren Tom played alongside recognizable Asian American icons Rosalind Chow, Russell Wong, and Victor Wong. Also featured were veteran actresses with international careers like Mainland Chinese Tsai Chin, Vietnamese Kieu Chinh and France Nuyen, and Lisa Lu, twice recipient of Taiwan's Golden Horse award for Best Actress. Shot in the Bay Area and Mainland China, the $11 million film was financed independently, with Oliver Stone and his partner Janet Yang acting as executive producers. A negative pick-up deal was signed by Disney's Jeffrey Katzenberg for their Buena Vista division, allowing Wang complete creative control.

The Joy Luck Club hit the screens a few months after the commer-

cial success of Rob Cohen's *Dragon*, a pious (and often inaccurate) homage to Bruce Lee, produced by Universal. Aimed at an interracial audience (hence the importance given to Bruce's American wife), the film introduced a new Asian American actor, Jason Scott Lee. A few months earlier, a Taiwanese-American independent production, Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*, won the Golden Bear at the 1993 Berlin Film Festival and was bought by Samuel Goldwyn. Relating the story of a generational conflict between traditional Taiwanese parents who want a grandchild and their gay son living in New York, *The Wedding Banquet* grossed over $6 million in the US in its first seven months.

Also last spring, at the Cannes Film Festival, Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*, starring Gong Li and Hong Kong matinee idol Leslie Cheung, shared the Palme d'Or with Jane Campion's *The Piano*. Produced in Hong Kong by former kung fu goddess Hsu Feng, *Farewell* was the first film in which Chen had considerable financial means. US distribution rights were acquired by Miramax (which had earlier picked up Zhang Yimou's *Raise the Red Lantern*, an Academy Award nominee and the first Mainland Chinese film to gross over $3 million). Since its release last fall, *Farewell* has topped $3 million and is expected to be the biggest money-making Chinese movie to date. Meanwhile, Cannes' Critics' Week section showed a low-budget Asian-American feature, Tony Chan's *Combination Platter*, discovered in January 1993 at Sundance and produced by Ulla Zwicker's and Nicole Ma's independent production company, Bluehorse Films. Distributed in the US through Arrow International, it is a bittersweet comedy about the undocumented workers in a Chinese restaurant in New York.

Playwright David Henry Hwang, like novelist Amy Tan, is reaching wider audiences through his screenplay adaptations. Last fall, Warner Brothers released David Cronenberg's film rendition of Hwang's Broadway play *M. Butterfly*. The film, which premiered in Toronto, stars Jeremy Irons as René Gallimard, the man in love with a mysterious Peking Opera diva, and John Lone as the communist spy who seduces Gallimard into believing he is a woman. Though it elicited mixed responses from Asian American audiences and fared poorly at the box office, *M. Butterfly* stands as a stunning example of Cronenberg's courage in exploring a white man's self-deceiving fascination with the oriental Other.

In classic Hollywood films like *The Sheik* (with Rudolph Valentino) or Frank Capra's *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*, it is the non-Western subject—the "native," "Bird of Paradise," or jaded Chinese General—who desires Western culture (and Westerners), which are perceived superior, endowed with what the Asian or African character is "lacking." Hwang reverses the cliché and turns the white man into the desiring fool. In Cronenberg's film, Gallimard's interest is stirred when the diva, Song Liling, sings an aria from Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, an opera narrating the unhappy love of a Japanese woman for a white man and her subsequent suicide. Yet Gallimard's last line before killing himself reveals an identification with the Other's "impossible" situation of desire: "My name is René Gallimard, otherwise known as Madama Butterfly."

A similar reversal can be witnessed in a more recent adaptation of Hwang's work, John Madden's *Golden Gate* (produced by Goldwyn in association with American Playhouse), which premiered in January at Sundance. The film stars Matt Dillon as FBI agent Walker, who is pressured to prosecute some Chinatown residents as "Reds" during the anti-Communist hysteria of the 1950s. One of his victims, Chen Jung Song (Tzi Ma), is sentenced to 10 years in prison. A broken man upon his release, he leaps to his death from San Francisco's Golden Gate. A guilt-ridden Walker falls in love with Song's daughter (Joan Chen) and, rejected by her, starts identifying with her dead father; he then commits suicide himself.

Sundance also revealed to U.S. audiences John Zhang's feature film *Consuming Sun*, winner of the FIPRESCI Prize at the Montreal Film Festival. Born in Mainland China, Zhang graduated from UCLA film school in 1992 and is now an American citizen. Zhang produced *Consuming Sun* for under $400,000. This US-China joint venture was coproduced by a Chinese television network and financed by personal funds collected through friends in the United States. "This was very much an underground film," says Zhang. "Even though the production took place entirely in China, we didn't go through the Film Bureau, but got a permit to make a TV film. I don't know yet if we will be allowed to show it in China, considering all the problems that [Tian Zhuangzhuang's] *The Blue Kite* and [Zhang Yuan's] *Beijing Bastards* are currently having." *Beijing Bastards*, an "underground" independent film shot semi-illegally, and *Blue Kite*, shot at the Beijing Film Studio but with a screenplay different from the one submitted to the Film Bureau, are currently banned in Mainland China. Like Hwang's screenplays, *Consuming Sun* also deals with transcultural fascination: Chinese writer Mai Kebo's love for Japanese culture is brought to a crisis during the Sino-Japanese war, when he is enlisted as a "collaborator" and translator by a former classmate, now an officer in the Japanese army and rival for the affection of the woman Mai loves.



The mothers and daughters of *The Joy Luck Club*. When developing this hit film, director Wayne Wang was told there were not enough good English-speaking Asian actresses to do the job.

Photo: Shane Sata, courtesy Buena Vista Pictures

Hong Kong cinema is also becoming a part of the American mediascape. John Woo's thrillers, Jackie Chan's stunts, and Tsui Hark's and Ching Siu Tung's ghost stories, once "cult films" for the happy few, are becoming increasingly popular. A new company, Rim Film Distributors, was created in Los Angeles "to bring Hong Kong movies to the general American audience," as reported in the *LA Weekly*. Its president, Tom Gray, who produced the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* movies, signed a contract with one of Hong Kong's largest studios, Raymond Chow's Golden Harvest. Rim Film "four-walled" (rented) one of the Laemmle multiplex screens in Santa Monica for an entire year. According to Roberta Chow, daughter of the legendary tycoon and Rim Film employee, the experience was "largely positive, for the public followed." One of the films, Michael Mak's *Sex and Zen*, an hilarious soft-core epic, has been shown throughout the United States and grossed about $300,000. Rim also four-walls Cinema Village in New York from time to time.

Interviewed by Janice Sakamoto when he was trying to raise money for *The Joy Luck Club*, Wayne Wang thought at the time that "the industry [didn't] give a fuck" about Chinese-American subjects. He now admits things have changed, partly because "there are more Asian American directors and producers, *a few* more executives in the industry, and better material." This shift owes something to the activity of such media organizations as Visual Communications (VC) in Los Angeles, Asian CineVision (ACV) in New York, and NAATA in San Francisco. Founded in 1971, 1976, and 1980 respectively, these Asian American media arts organizations are pathbreakers in a

network that includes smaller groups in Seattle (Kind Street Media), Boston (Asian American Resource Workshop), Washington, DC (Arts and Media), and elsewhere.

Wang himself is a product of this advocacy movement. Having studied experimental cinema in the Bay Area in the sixties, he honed his talents at public television in his hometown, Hong Kong. When he realized he had become "too Americanized," Wang came back to work as a community organizer in Chinatown. "That was in the early seventies, when Asians were finding their own identity—like African Americans," he recalls. It was through the festivals organized by VC, ACV, and NAATA that Wang's landmark film *Chan Is Missing* (1981) was first shown, as was Ang Lee's first feature, *Pushing Hands* (1991), 10 years later. While it took almost 15 years for Wang to reach the mainstream, the process was much shorter for Lee. Credit goes in no small part to the advocacy work by Asian American media arts centers to change the images of Asians in American culture.

The question now is whether these organizations have outlived their usefulness. The answer lies in a closer look at the recent Asian American film festivals they sponsor. Not only are these events more helpful than ever in promoting the work of new film- and videomakers, but the content of Asian American media has changed enormously, revealing a rich, complex, and surprising array of themes, approaches, and concerns. While most of the work produced in the seventies or early eighties was struggling to define Asian American identities, reclaim untold stories, and fight racism, new generations of artists have emerged who don't want to be bound to exploring issues linked to their ethnicity.

One of the hits at the NAATA's Asian American International Film Showcase in March 1993 was *Glamazon* (1993), by Rico Martinez, who claims a triple Chinese-Filipino-Mexican heritage. Martinez' first feature, *Desperate* (1991), found its first audiences in Asian American festivals, even though all its characters are Caucasians. *Glamazon*, an alluring mixture of fiction and documentary, recreates the astonishing life of "she-male" Barbara LeMay, a poor little white boy from the South who became a burlesque queen. Bypassed by "legitimate" festivals, the film did extremely well in Asian American and gay networks before finding a distributor, Headliner.



John Lone in *M. Butterfly*, as the spy/opera diva who seduces a French diplomat by exploiting his stereotyped notions of the Oriental female.
Courtesy Warner Bros.

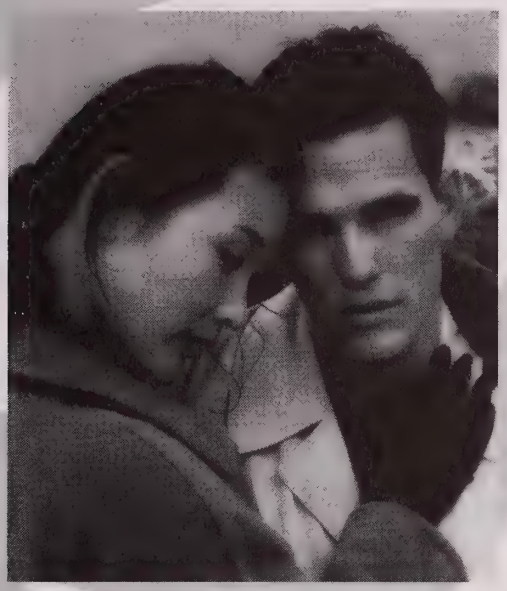
Japanese-American director Gregg Araki's career follows a comparable path. His low-budget black-and-white features exploring the angst of young people in LA (*Three Bewildered People in the Night*, 1987; *The Long Week-End (O' Despair)*, 1987) were first shown by organizations like ACV, VC, and NAATA. Then came *The Living End* (1992), a super-16 color film showing two HIV-positive lovers on the lam through California, which, distributed by October Films, grossed about $1 million nationwide. Araki, who was sometimes attacked for not having Asian characters in his films, told *Bomb* magazine that he identifies punk culture as a bigger influence on him "than being gay or being Asian." In *Totally F***ed Up* (1993), shown in Toronto and Sundance, Araki uses an interracial cast headed by a young Asian American actor to tell the story of six gay teenagers trying to define their sexual identities, get dates, and deal with homophobia in the Los Angeles suburbia. Yet, he explains "these kids are just kids, and they have certain problems, but their ethnicity is not one."

Fellow Japanese American filmmakers Jon Moritsugu (*Der Elvis, My Degeneration, Hippy Porn*) and Roddy Bogawa (*Two or Three Incidents in June*) are equally intent in exploring the anxieties and ecstasies of American youth culture, although Bogawa's latest film, *Some Divine Wind*, deals directly with the complexities of mixed parentage. Moritsugu is currently completing two films: *Mod Fuck Explosion* is a feature about teenagers in love within the context of a gang war of Japanese bikers against white mod scooters kids. Then there is the ITVS-funded *Terminal USA*, which Moritsugu defines as "an accelerated version of the soap opera about a dysfunctional Japanese family living in Detroit, Michigan. I consider it a radical project in that it is a representation of Asians never seen before... This is really my first attempt at dealing with the issue of my identity as a yellow man."

Taiwanese-born artist Shu Lea Cheang states that she "would hate to be limited to the so-called Asian American experience." The community she identifies with is that of media artists and activists with whom she collaborates in New York, from Paper Tiger Television to Filipino performance artist/writer Jessica Hagedorn. In her video and installation work, such as *Color Schemes* and *Those Fluttering Objects of Desire*, Cheang inserts issues of Asian American identity within anti-colonialist, anti-racist struggle, questions of media representation, and sexual politics. As a producer of *To Be Televised*, a series of five hour-long compilation tapes from the Philippines, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mainland China, she explored the role of video as a site of resistance and a tool of empowerment in Asia. Having gone to Tiananmen Square in June 1989, she brought back material for a five-channel installation, *Making News/Making History*, as well as *How Was History Wounded*, a videotape deconstructing how Taiwanese and Chinese media represented the Democracy Movement and its repression. This trip to China was also an opportunity to redefine her cultural identity: "It started as a search for a homeland, then it became a search for a form of political awareness. I didn't come back for the landscape, I came back for the whole media community I want to be identified with."

In her first feature film, *Fresh Kill* (programmed at the Panorama in Berlin and the Créteil Women's Film Festival in Paris), Cheang goes way beyond the issues of "identity" to create a funny, whimsical, and visually compelling paean to New York's ethnic, cultural, and sexual diversity: A polluted fish from Taiwan comes to disturb the

Hwang's *Golden Gate*, directed by John Madden, aims for the mainstream with a name-brand cast—Joan Chen and Matt Dillon—headlining the McCarthy-era drama.
Photo: Bob Greene, courtesy Samuel Goldwyn Co.



lives of an interracial lesbian couple (Sarita Choudhury, of *Mississippi Masala* fame, and Erin McMurtry), two sushi workers/computer geniuses, and a few callous yippies while making cats glow in the dark and smart little girls disappear.

Asian American festivals also show experimental video dealing with issues of gender and sexual identities. The "Gender & Its Multiples" programs curated by Chinese-American videomaker/gay activist Ming-Yuen S. Ma for NAATA's Showcase and VC's Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film and Video Festival contained works by Pablo Battista, May Fung, Soo Jin Kim, Tran T. Kim-Trang, Anson Mak, Meena Nanji, Azian Nurudin, Ellen Pau, Valerie Soe, Chuleenan Svetvilas, and many others—including the ITVS-produced collaboration between performance artist Paul Kwan and filmmaker Arnold Iger, *Anatomy of a Springroll*. ACV's Videoscape series last year showcased the crosscultural/cross-gender explorations of Christine Choy, Dai Sil Kim Gibson, and Elaine Kim's (*SA-I-GU*), Richard Fung (*Out of the Blue*), Victor Huey (*Rocking the Great Walls*), Quentin Lee (*To Ride a Cow*), Meng Ong (*China Doll*), and Angel Velasco Shaw (*Nailed*), as well as shorter narrative films such as Christine Chang's *Be Good My Children* (1992) and Helen Lee's *My Niagara* (1992). Yet these festivals still have room for more traditional features, such as "Tiana" Thi Thanh Nga's *From Hollywood to Hanoi* (1992), a spirited account of her return to her native Vietnam, which opened the Asian Pacific Festival, or Harada Masato's *Painted Desert* (1993), which played both in Los Angeles and New York. *Painted Desert* is a noirish exploration of the California wasteland, in which veteran actress Nobu McCarthy plays a character inspired by the legendary Tokyo Rose, a Japanese-American woman accused of collaboration with the Japanese after WWII. Quite different in style and approach, both films strive to define hybridity: "homecoming" is no longer possible for Asian immigrants, and their identity is anchored in the American mediascape (the B-movies in which "Tiana" got her break as an actress) or the lures, illusions, and dark realities of the landscape, as in Masato's film.



For younger directors like Gregg Araki, punk culture is more influential than being gay or Asian. Like his earlier films, *Totally F*ed Up* features a multiracial cast.**
Courtesy Strand Releasing

Whether presented by Hollywood, American independents, or Asian directors, Asian subjects are "hot" in the US. Is this a real opening towards non-Western cultures? Could it be the recognition of the essential hybridity of American society? Or it just a fad? "Last year being gay was hot, and this year it's being Asian," says Araki. "As a filmmaker, this is not something I think about. What's important is that America is no longer white."

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NETPAC Promotes Asian Film

THE HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IS CURRENTLY BENEFITING FROM THE NEW INROADS MADE BY CHINESE FILMS IN THE WEST. LAST NOVEMBER, IT SPONSORED THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL NETPAC CONFERENCE ON PROMOTING AND DISTRIBUTING ASIAN FILMS. NETPAC (NETWORK FOR THE PROMOTION OF ASIAN CINEMA) WAS CREATED FIVE YEARS AGO IN NEW DELHI, BY INDIAN FILM CRITIC ARUNA VASUDEV. FULFILLING AN OLD DREAM, SHE SIMULTANEOUSLY FOUNDED *CINEMAYA*, THE ONLY ENGLISH-SPEAKING QUARTERLY ENTIRELY DEVOTED TO ASIAN CINEMA.

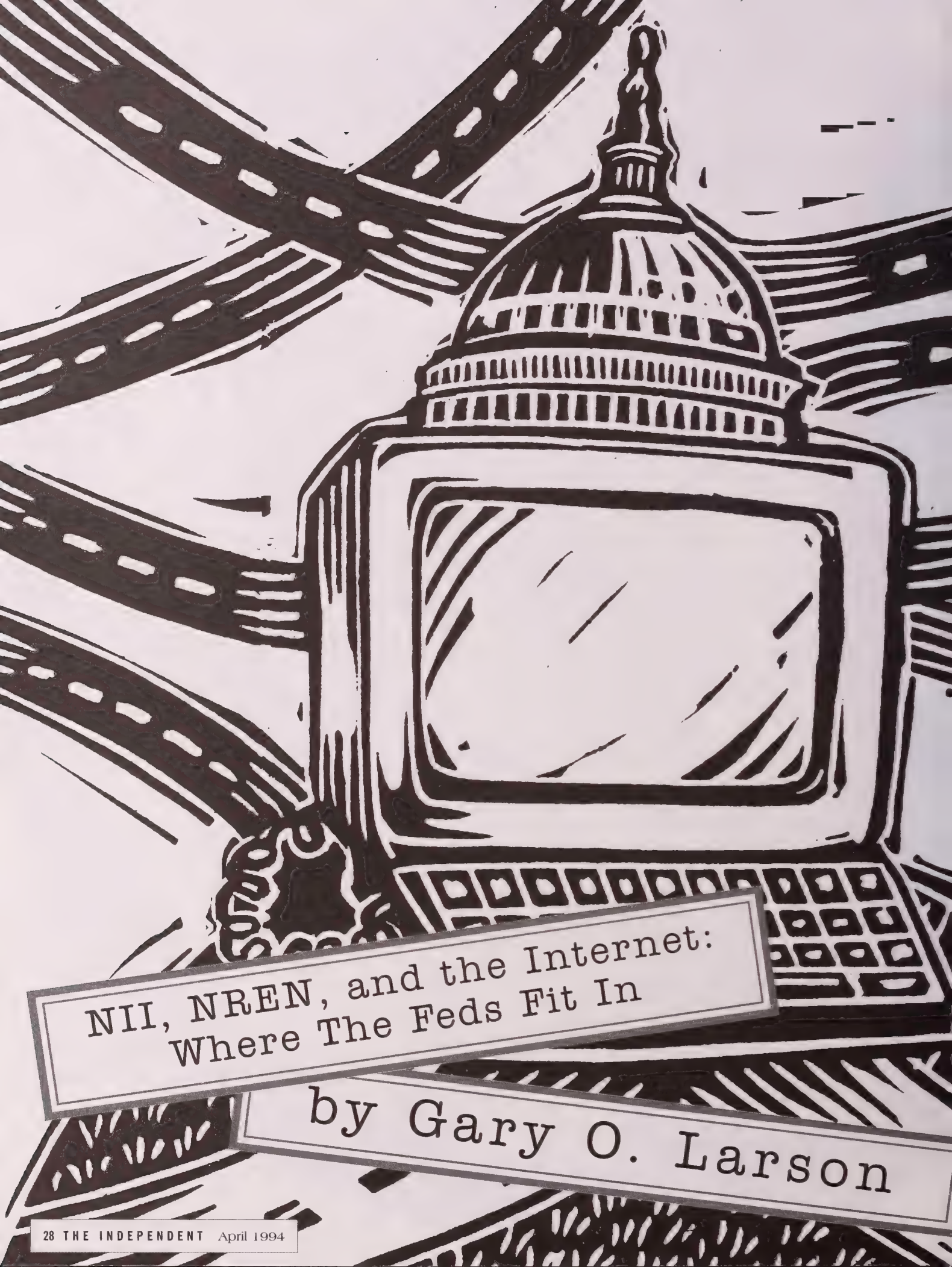
The conference's 150-odd participants—festival directors, scholars, curators, TV programmers, publicists, media advocates, and filmmakers—flew in from 26 countries, ranging from Iran to Finland. During the panels and workshops they discussed issues related to the dissemination of Asian cinema, particularly its poor distribution within the Asian continent itself, which is largely colonized by Hollywood. "Why can't an Indian peasant see a film relating the life of a Vietnamese peaant?" was among the questions mulled over.

Other panels discussed the successful marketing of Zhang Yimou's *Raise the Red Lantern*; the role of television, universities and nontheatrical exhibition centers; and the cases of several national cinemas (the Philippines, India, and Sri Lanka). In addition, an Asian Film Discovery Program selected by NETPAC's members presented 14 programs. These included Im Kwon-Taek's superb *Sopyonje* (South Korea, 1993), Yu Wei-Yen's haunting *Moonlight Boy* (Taiwan, 1993), and the first shorts ever produced in Mongolia (N. Uranchimeg's moving *Shackles*, 1991 and N. Nyamdawaa's *An Unfortunate Fortune*, 1991).

Vasudev announced the creation of a NETPAC Award to be bestowed at the 1994 International Forum in Berlin. The next NETPAC conference will convene in two years in an Asian city yet to be determined. NETPAC also plans to organize workshops in different Asian cities, publish a resource directory and a book on Asian cinema, and produce a regular newsletter.

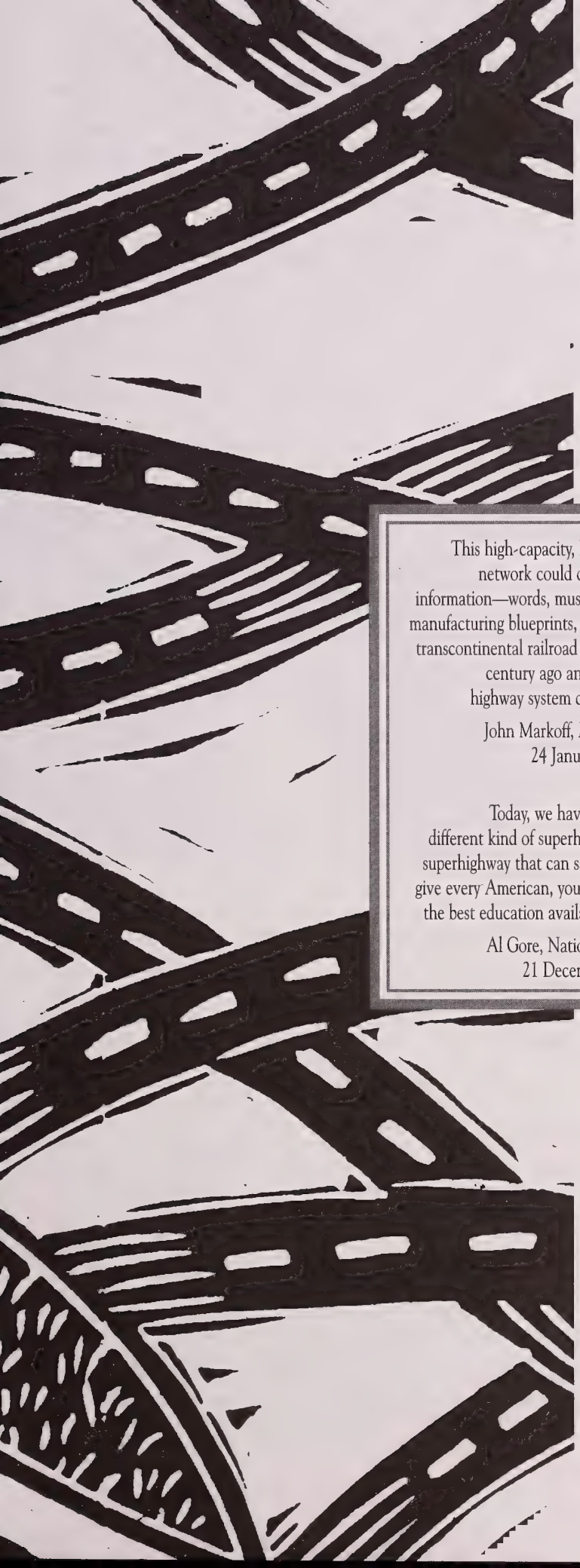
For information about NETPAC, contact: Aruna Vasudev, *Cinemaya*, fax: 0091-11-462-7211.

BÉRÉNICE REYNAUD



NII, NREN, and the Internet: Where The Feds Fit In

by Gary O. Larson



"IF YOU EVER PLAN TO MOTOR WEST," SONGWRITER ROBERT Troup tells us in his 1946 hit, "travel my way, take the highway that's the best. Get your kicks on Route Sixty-Six!" Even for those of us who have never had that particular pleasure (or who were otherwise occupied while Tod and Buzz managed to find work in a different jerkwater town every week on the old CBS television series), there's something concrete, almost comforting, about Route 66. It's gone now, having been replaced by no less than five wider, straighter, and far less interesting interstates, but the spirit of the old road lives on. We can still picture Route 66 in our mind's eye, stretching across plains, mountains, and deserts, connecting Lake Michigan to the Pacific Ocean. "You'll see Amarillo, Gallup, New Mexico; Flagstaff, Arizona; don't forget Winona, Kingman, Barstow, San Bernadino."

Not nearly so comforting is the "information superhighway," which, for all of its publicity of late, remains distant, elusive, complex. It doesn't really exist at all, in fact. It's a tantalizing fiction, stretching from the vice president's vivid imagination to the gleam in some cable magnate's eye, from the modem on your desktop computer to the business plan of some far-off regional phone company. It's either virtual monopoly or virtual democracy, depending on whose vision you believe, virtual information-exchange or virtual lowest common denominator. Or possibly all of the above.

> This high-capacity, high-speed computer network could do for the flow of information—words, music, movies, medical images, manufacturing blueprints, and much more—what the transcontinental railroad did for the flow of goods a century ago and the interstate highway system did in this century.
>
> John Markoff, *New York Times*, 24 January 1993
>
> Today, we have a dream for a different kind of superhighway—an information superhighway that can save lives, create jobs, and give every American, young and old, the chance for the best education available to anyone anywhere.
>
> Al Gore, National Press Club, 21 December 1993

The information superhighway is simple enough in its popular incarnation, certainly in *USA Today* and *Time*, where it's most commonly depicted as a sleek electronic toll road, with Bell Atlantic at one end, cable TV giant TCI at the other, and 500 channels of entertainment in between. Home shopping and video-on-demand appear to be the chief roadside attractions: Hair Club for Men available 'round the clock on channel 178, *Home Alive Nine* starting in four minutes on channel 317, and hours and hours of re-runs. Heeeeere's Johnny, here's Lucy, Andy, Archie, and hundreds more, and there goes the neighborhood.

Fortunately, the 500-channel model is merely an artifact of our limited imaginations. Appropriately designed, a fully implemented digital system would more closely resemble telephone service—which allows one to send and receive messages anywhere—than the one-way street of cable television. Still, the highway metaphor is apt: For better or worse, and probably a little of both, the information superhighway will also run through Washington, D.C. And if nothing else, that means this particular highway will be anything but simple.

Part of the complexity stems from all of the confusing road signs, the multiplicity of terms—or worse yet, initials—that have been attached to various digital highways, both real and imagined. The Internet, the National Research and Education Network (NREN), and the National Information Infrastructure (NII) are three of the most common, and they are often used interchangeably, which only adds to the confusion. Cast in cinematic terms, the Internet—an intricate web of some 1.7 million computer networks around the world, relaying both commercial and academic traffic—would be a vast collection of theaters, from large multiplex cinemas at suburban malls to tiny screening rooms in downtown arts spaces. NREN, in contrast, is rather like the American Film Insititute—five federally sponsored testbed centers investigating high-speed computing—although in its vision of ultimately bringing academic networking to the masses, NREN is much more expansive than the AFI. Finally, the NII is everything—and nothing. For it, too, is a vision, with one eye

fixed on the private sector, where the communications media (telephones, television, publishing, and computer networking) are rapidly converging, and the other on the federal presence that will be necessary in order to stimulate, regulate, and ensure broad access to the evolving digital infrastructure.

That "federal presence" in computer networking actually dates back a quarter century, when a Cold War plan, designed to ensure that computers at various research, military, and defense-contractor installations would keep humming even after a nuclear attack, produced something called ARPANET. That network eventually spawned MILNET and CSNET (which later merged with another academic network, BITNET) before being succeeded by the National Science Foundation's NSFNET, which is itself now served by yet another set of initials, ANS (Advanced Network & Services), the creation of Merit, IBM, and MCI, and a major provider of high-speed, "backbone" connections for a wide variety of public and private networks. Once limited to a handful of sites, the national backbone provides connections to more than 4,000 research and educational institutions throughout the country.

Without that federal commitment to high-speed networking, it's doubtful the Internet would have reached the size that it has, and it certainly would not have grown so quickly. A well-kept secret in its early years of operation, the Internet has enjoyed unprecedented growth since 1988, doubling in size every year. It cannot maintain that pace indefinitely, of course, but with all of the publicity it has been receiving of late, and with the eventual link-up of the major commercial services, Internet will continue to grow well beyond its current estimated 16 million users worldwide.

Once on the Internet, with its 6,000-odd USENET discussion groups (and some of them are exceedingly odd), there's open access to scores of computers around the world (well, open if you know a few handy UNIX commands), and its suite of resource discovery tools (gopher, WAIS, World Wide Web, with more to come), it's easy to forget about Washington, D.C., but that doesn't mean the feds don't have designs on the Internet, too. It's not so much that Big Brother is watching. Rather, he's trying to make up his mind what to do next, a prospect that can be equally daunting.

Aside from Vice President Gore's more ambitious speculations, the federal ruminations thus far have largely focused on the NREN legislation, the current federal vision of the future of high-speed networking, and quite possibly the bridge between the Internet and the information superhighway. As visions go, however, NREN's is much more utilitarian than utopian. Just as the government's earliest investments in computer networking were a product of Cold War tensions, NREN is firmly tied to competition on another front.

"Advances in computer science and technology," proclaims the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991, "are vital to the nation's prosperity, national and economic security, industrial production, engineering, and scientific advancement...." This time around, however, it isn't Sputnik but rather the Honda Civic that poses the biggest threat to our domestic tranquillity. "The United States currently leads the world in the development and use of high-performance computing for national security, industrial productivity, science, and engineering," the 1991 legislation warns, "but that lead is being challenged by foreign competitors." With its emphasis on science and engineering, the original NREN legislation predictably focused on coordinating the activities of some of the more rigorous parts of the federal bureaucracy—the Departments of Energy and Commerce, NASA, EPA, and NSF—overlooking entirely the cultural sector—the Department of Education, the Smithsonian, Library of Congress, and the arts and humanities endowments. Three years in the making, the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (sponsored by Al Gore in the Senate) authorized $2 billion in spending over five years. Its initial appropriations, however, allocated mainly to NSF and NASA for the support of five testbed centers, were a more modest $93 million.

In the two years following the passage of the first high-speed computing legislation, there has been far more talk than action in Washington. NREN may eventually increase transmission speeds from 45 megabits to three gigabits per second, but the wheels of democracy are still hand-cranked affairs, and the technology legislation is no exception. All indications are that new legislation will be passed this year, however, producing a road map for the information superhighway that will doubtless draw heavily on the prototypes and trial runs of the past two years.

The first step in that process came with the Information Infrastructure and Technology Act of 1992, popularly known as "NREN II" in the House, where it eventually passed, and "More Gore" in the Senate, where it languished. The proposal took a small step toward extending the reach of networked computing beyond the engineers, but the shift in emphasis was slight, from white coats to blue suits. "If we're going to strengthen our economy and create jobs," declared then-Senator Gore upon introducing the legislation in July 1992, "we must move these advanced technologies from the laboratories into the marketplace...." But Gore's plan was notable, at least, for including health care and education among the beneficiaries of high-speed computing: "So that students from kindergarten through college, factory workers and managers, doctors and health care providers can benefit from the technologies available now only in research laboratories and the data they can make accessible, we must expand our efforts to bring advanced technologies to the people who can benefit from their use."

If artists and their audiences aren't among the people slated to benefit from this technology, perhaps they might at least take heart from another aspect of the 1992 legislation, which calls for "digital libraries." Still, these "huge data bases that store text, imagery, video, and sound" were to be under the purview of NSF and NASA; only a passing reference was made to the Library of Congress elsewhere in the legislation (and, as before, with absolutely no reference to the other federal cultural agencies). We may have a saxophonist in the White House, but the arts don't show up on the federal list of priorities these days.

NREN II edged closer to reality last summer, with the passage in the House of Rep. Rick Boucher's (D-VA) National Information Infrastructure Act of 1993 (the main points of which are incorporated into Title VI of Sen. Ernest Hollings' (D-SC) National Competitveness Act of 1993, still making its way through the Senate). Expanding yet again on the original NREN bill, Boucher's 166 legislation was notable for three new provisions: (1) expanded access, targeting "historically underserved populations and individuals with disabilities"; (2) a "connections program," to foster "the development of network services in local communities which will connect institutions of education at all levels, libraries, museums, and State and local governments to each other"; and (3) ease-of-use provisions, including training programs for librarians "to instruct the public in the use of hardware and software for accessing and using computer networks," and "research programs needed to develop and demonstrate human/computer interfaces that will simplify access to and use of the Internet by nonspecialists...."

Yet here again, the emphasis of the Boucher bill was narrowly pragmatic, stressing "workforce training in mathematics, science, and technology, and in specific job-related skills including literacy." Even when Boucher appeared to flirt with *Mondo 2000*, calling for the production of "consumer-oriented, interactive, multimedia materials," his motivation was closer to *Prevention*: such material would be limited to the "delivery of health information to the public." A laudable goal, certainly, but not as imaginative as, say, a plan to pipe the digitized works of NEA fellows into the public schools.

We've been down this road before, of course. The National Science Foundation, which began in 1950, grew phenomenally during the Cold War (from $3.5 million in 1952 to $480 million in 1965), and federal funds for education took a decidedly mechanistic turn in the wake of Soviet scientific advances. It wasn't until the more expansive years of the Great Society that the arts and humanities

endowments were established. However meager their initial funding (the NEA remained under $10 million during its first five years in operation), the adjustment in the national agenda was an important one, as Sen. Edward Kennedy made clear in his testimony on behalf of the cultural legislation in 1965. "We may make great strides in atomic energy and space exploration, in automation, in biology, and chemistry," Kennedy observed. "But we will be dull and listless men, amid all these wonders, if we do not also expand the human mind and spirit."

Such sentiments as these are rarely voiced in Congress today, at least not on behalf of cultural activities. Thus the nonprofit arts can scarcely expect a free ride on the information superhighway, or even directions on how to get there from here. If the arts community had to overcome indifference in the fifties before it could hope to secure federal patronage in the sixties, the challenge it faces in the nineties—overcoming both the predominance of conglomerate culture and the fear and loathing of Congress—is even greater. Nor, given the current hands-off, deregulatory mood in Washington, can the arts expect any special favors as the traffic laws of the information superhighway are formulated.

In fact, while the left hand of Congress has been sketching the aforementioned variations on the theme of high-speed computer networking over the past few years—generally weighted toward research and scientific applications—the right hand on Capitol Hill has been concerned with untying the many regulatory knots that stand in the way of the potential highway engineers from the cable and telephone industries. Most of these regulations date from an earlier era when phones were phones, TVs were TVs, and computers were something that IBM sold. Nevertheless, one wonders how much leveling the playing field for billion-dollar corporations will do for nonprofit entities and individuals—arts organizations and artists among them. On paper, the entrance of telephone companies into the content business, offering 'video on demand,' for example, looks promising. But the 'demand' side of the equation remains troublesome. Tower Records and Video has a lot on its shelves, after all, but the masses aren't exactly beating a path to its door demanding works by Ornette Coleman and Stan Brakhage. Marginalization is no less real given the presence of a few more tycoons battling it out for control of the mainstream.

Two pieces of legislation in particular loom large on the telecommunications frontier, approaching their deregulatory tasks from different angles, but designed to achieve the same results: setting off a virtual Oklahoma land-rush for prime real estate along the information superhighway. HR 3626, introduced in the last session by Reps. Jack Brooks (D-TX) and John Dingell (D-MI), would restore to local telephone companies three key markets that had been declared off-limits by the divestiture of AT&T in 1984: long-distance operations, equipment manufacture, and information services. If the seven regional Bell operating companies (RBOCs) stand to gain from Brooks-Dingell, then HR 3636, co-authored by Reps. Ed Markey (D-MA) and Jack Fields (R-TX), appears to be more of a break-even proposition. With this legislation, the RBOCs would lose their monopolies on local telephone services, but they would gain in another arena, with the elimination of regulations that currently prohibit them from delivering video to the home.

The recently introduced Clinton-Gore legislative package endorses these basic principles, in the belief that deregulation will stimulate the kind of private investment—anywhere from $100 to $400 billion—that will be necessary to complete a full-fledged National Information Infrastructure (NII). As expected, the vice president has emerged as the leading figure in the NII debates, carrying on the work he began in the Senate, but with considerably more clout. During the 1992 campaign, Gore sounded at times as if he believed the federal government should spend as much money on the digital highway as it had on the earlier, asphalt variety (which amounted to a 90 percent share for some parts of the interstate system). These days, however, the vice president is sounding much more conservative, calling for a federal role limited largely to priming the pump (with modest research and community-access funding), setting the tone (encouraging links to schools and hospitals), establishing a few ground rules (equitable access and network compatibility), and basically standing clear of the corporate steamrollers that will actually pave the information superhighway. "Unlike the interstates," Gore declared in his speech on telecommunications at the National Press Club in Washington last December, "the information highways will be built, paid for, and funded by the private sector."

It may well be that the vision Gore outlined in his January speech to the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences—"a seamless web of communications networks, computers, databases, and consumer electronics that will put vast amounts of information at users' fingertips"—will eventually be realized. The financial stakes seem high enough, and the cable-telephone mergers lucrative enough, that the major concession Gore asks for—a commitment to nondiscriminatory access and interoperability—will be readily accepted by the Bell Atlantics and Time-Warners. Nor can it be denied, in this period of unprecedented technological convergence, that the Communications Act of 1934 needs a thorough overhaul; that many of the old regulations simply don't apply in this new environment. Yet there are lessons from the past, too, that should not be overlooked.

Route 66 comes to mind again in this regard—or any distant highway, for that matter. There are a variety of ways one gets one's bearings on unfamiliar roadways—Red Roofs, Golden Arches, and other corporate icons—but it's the car radio that provides the most comfort. Nor is it simply the syndicated voices of Rush Limbaugh and Larry King that send one scurrying to the left side of the FM dial. That's sufficient impetus, to be sure, but there's a better reason than bad talk shows to seek refuge between 88 and 92 megahertz, that vital part of the 'ether highway' that almost never existed at all—at least not in its present, enlightened form.

During the congressional debate over the Communications Act of 1934, a proposed amendment reserving 25 percent of the AM channels for educational use became a major issue. In order to avoid a delay in the passage of the act, supporters of the educational set-aside agreed to a compromise provision, requiring the FCC to report to Congress on the advisability of allocating "fixed percentages of radio broadcasting facilities to particular types or kinds of nonprofit radio programs or to persons identified with particular types or kinds of nonprofit activities." Remarkably, the FCC reported early in 1935 that it had found ample opportunity for educational programming in the existing commercial broadcast structure, eliminating the need for a special allocation of frequencies for this purpose.

A decade later, however, apparently having grown skeptical of the educational value of such quiz shows as Kay Kyser's Kollege of Musical Knowledge, the FCC formally reversed its position. In setting aside 20 percent of the relatively untested FM spectrum for the exclusive use of noncommercial, educational broadcasters, the FCC had staked an early, important claim for cultural pluralism.

It may require just such an act, effectively setting aside lanes for noncommercial culture on the digital highway, to realize the full potential of the national information infrastructure. Nothing in the NII debate thus far, unfortunately, suggests that special provisions for the nonprofit cultural sector will automatically be granted. Nor has the NEA, whose grasp of the cultural implications of digital technology has been feeble, demonstrated any leadership in this regard. But it's unlikely that the arts community can fight this battle alone. It will have to fashion the kinds of alliances—and the library and education communities are perhaps the best places to start—that will give the arts sufficient clout to be heard over the clamor of the commercial interests already lining up to enter the information superhighway sweepstakes. Only in this manner can we hope to prevent the creation of a new digital delivery system that simply offers more of the same—middle-of-the-highway entertainment that broadcast and cable television has been sending our way for years.

Gary O. Larson is a writer living in Washington, DC.

HOT RODS OR ROAD KILL

On The Information Superhighway

By now, the information superhighway is a household word, if not a household reality. But despite all the talk, there's no reliable forecast of how it will ultimately look, who will have access, and what it will cost.

Even less is known about how the new delivery systems will impact independent film- and videomakers. To provide a glimpse into the future, we invited nine people from the field—producers, distributors, funders, and public-policy advocates—to speculate on the following questions:

What aspect of the new technologies will have the most impact on the way independent film- and videomakers produce, market, and distribute their work?

What can independents do now—individually or collectively—to better position themselves for the communications environment to come five years from now?

Andrew Blau
Coordinator, Communications Policy Project
The Benton Foundation

The issue for independents as they consider the information superhighway is how to avoid becoming road kill, crushed by the big rigs of commercial media. The solutions lie in understanding how the interrelated technologies are evolving, reckoning the economic pressures these technologies are producing, and reading the pointers toward new collaborations.

New network options and compression technologies are adding countless channels to the universe of information options. Moreover, distance becomes immaterial as falling transmission costs mean that transporting a signal across the country is not any more expensive or troublesome than moving it across the street—and is even sometimes less so. As a result, the economics of distribution are changing, since one of the most significant barriers—the cost of access to a distribution channel—is falling and will continue to drop.

Similarly, the cost of production is falling as pressure from the consumer-electronics and computer worlds pushes down the price of chip cameras and digital editing. (Admittedly, those same changes raise expectations, so that the costs of paintboxes, audio sweetening, and other effects drive the overall costs of many productions back up.)

With the real costs of production and distribution falling, will technology deliver independents into the kingdom of media heaven? Don't believe it. The real (and rising) costs shift elsewhere. In a world of hundreds, even thousands of channels, access to production and distribution is becoming easy; access to an audience will be the hard (and expensive) part.

Viewers faced with channel glut are likely to continue doing what they do now: go for what they know. Surfing through a thousand channels could take all evening. Microsoft, Bell Atlantic, and others are working on TV-top devices that allow users to navigate the options, but how will the audience find you? The challenge for independents is to devise ways to collect potential viewers into an audience. One option is to work with groups that are already building audiences. Consider, for example, environmental or other "issue" groups: Through advertising, direct mail, and other means, these groups are aggregating people into "audiences" based on their interest in a given issue. These groups could be the programming signposts, if not gatekeepers of tomorrow, as their members look to them for program tips.

In this multichannel, multimedia environment, the significance of any single channel or medium becomes less important, while brand recognition becomes more important. Thus, rallying political forces to secure a channel for independents may yield little of real value; creating sustainable support structures—unaffiliated with any particular medium—to organize and promote voices and views will be more crucial.

Lastly, a world of integrated multimedia points to a world of integrated problems; success will depend on integrated solutions. The challenges faced by independent film- and videomakers increasingly will look like iterations of the problems faced by community radio, independent audiomakers, alternative or small presses, media arts centers, community television, and computer community networking. As the media merge,

people from each of these areas will face the same issues of channel glut and organizing audiences. Looking for answers for a single medium when the media are merged (or multiplied) will be frustrating and fruitless. Independent mediamakers can be allies if they join forces and create audiences around content as opposed to their individual mediums.

David Thomas
Vice President of marketing, New Culture Network

The television, telecommunications, and information industries are converging at a pace that is unparalleled in the history of communication. With the media focusing on billion-dollar mergers, advances in technology, and 500 channels of chaos, the potential cultural and social benefits of this convergence have been left in the shadows. While the most frequent metaphor used to describe this new TV environment is the video shopping mall, the real marvel will be increased communication between people through access to alternative ideas, information, and artistic visions.

Currently the economics of television, an advertising revenue-based mass-market system, dictates that you get only what you are given. Eventually consumers will be able to choose the programs they want to watch from unlimited sources. The resulting fragmentation of the mass-market system will translate into:

- increased creative freedom for artists (a program's commercial viability will be less reliant on mass appeal);
- increased public awareness of independent film and video;
- increased production of independent films to match demand;
- new markets for independent film and video, including a substantial secondary cable window (represented by New Culture Network) and Video On Demand.

The real challenge for independents is marketing. In the end, even if independent films have unlimited access to TV's post-channel universe, they will still have to compete with studio programming, which, as always, will be backed by massive amounts of ad dollars. Such advertising effectively creates a filter between filmmakers and consumers because small distributors (let alone individual mediamakers) can't afford $100,000 for a 30-second national spot.

Meanwhile, there is a growing market for independent films. Moderately successful independent films consistently outperform studio films by three to one on a per-screen average, even with little or no advertising support. The market exists, but the means to communicate to it do not. The independent film industry desperately needs an umbrella organization (including filmmakers, distributors, support organizations, theater owners, home video and television programmers) with the specific mandate of educating and marketing the concept of independent film to the general public. The consumer has to see and understand what the alternative is before they can choose it. Beyond protecting and encouraging creative freedom, individual and industry marketing are the essential elements needed to survive in the mega-merger age.

New Culture Network is committed to securing a significant venue for independent works on American television. Toward that end, the network is aggressively pursuing the following agendas:

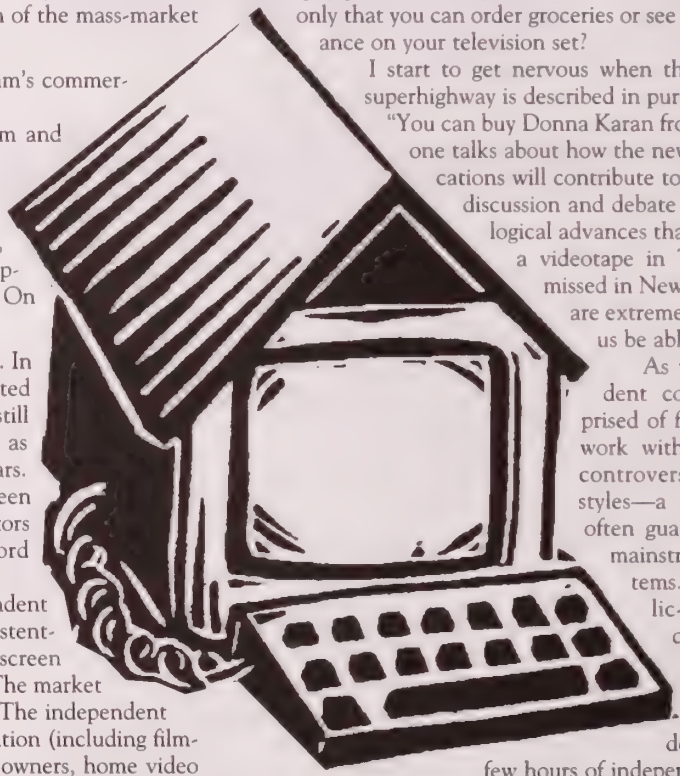
- providing a secondary cable revenue stream to hundreds, eventually thousands, of independent filmmakers;
- instituting programs to increase the public's awareness of independent film and video;
- providing general assistance to filmmakers and support organizations.

New Culture Network is but one of many opportunities unfolding before us. National, regional, and community organizations, artists, and interested individuals are at the front lines in this quest for equitable access and a society based on diversity and expression. Their actions will ultimately decide the fate of American independent film in the 500-channel world.

Kate Horsfield
Executive Director, Video Data Bank

SOME DAYS YOU WAKE UP AND IMMEDIATELY START TO WORRY. NOTHING IN PARTICULAR, IT'S JUST A SUSPICION THAT FORCES ARE ALIGNING QUIETLY AND THERE WILL BE TROUBLE.. — *Jenny Holzer*

As anyone who reads the *Wall Street Journal* can easily see, the telecommunications superhighway is a very, very big deal. Viacom finaly snatched up Paramount; Bell Atlantic was sweet (then sour) on Tele-Communications, Inc., while AT&T has been buying everything else in sight. Mega-mega-conglomerates are being formed to control the viewing (and buying) patterns of the global television audience. The cliffhanger headlines about the superhighway are also huge, but poorly explained: There are 500 channels of interactive television, but does this mean 200 channels of video games, 200 channels of home shopping, and 100 channels of pay-per-view Hollywood films? Will *interactive* end up meaning only that you can order groceries or see your checking account balance on your television set?



I start to get nervous when the the telecommunications superhighway is described in purely convenience terms, like "You can buy Donna Karan from your own home," but no one talks about how the new interactive telecommunications will contribute to a new public space for the discussion and debate of ideas. Sure, the technological advances that make it possible to watch a videotape in Texas from a festival you missed in New York via the server system are extremely seductive, but will any of us be able to afford it?

As we all know, the independent community is mostly comprised of film- and videomakers who work with complex and sometimes controversial ideas and working styles—a combination which most often guarantees omission from the mainstream television delivery systems. (Even Jenny Holzer's public-service announcement, quoted above, was rejected by a PBS station manager for being "too thought provoking.") After two decades, we still have only a few hours of independent work per year shown nationally on PBS; Blockbuster and other commercial video stores rarely dedicate shelf space to independent work; local politics are forcing cutbacks on cable access channels. We've been left out before, and now the big question is, Will the information superhighway really open up options for independents to be broadcast over new delivery systems (and therefore new audiences), or will the work be marginalized again?

While the potential benefits of the superhighway are being endlessly hyped, we must keep in mind that this technology is being developed around colossal profit incentives. Meanwhile, the costs of digitizing tapes and films, loading onto a server system, and sending and receiving multimedia video across fiber-optic wires are still unknown.

Only one thing seems *really* clear: All of the organizations representing independents—the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), the Independent Media Distributors' Alliance, (IMDA), the Alliance for Community Media, and the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression (NCFE)—should organize a joint task force to represent the independent media field in the boardrooms and government offices

where the new telecommunications policies are being formulated. After accruing realistic information on how these policies might affect the independent media field and at what cost, an advocacy plan based on the interests of producers, media arts centers, festivals, distributors, and cable access programmers should be put in place.

A number of months ago I met with several representatives of Bell Atlantic, who hypothesized how independent work might be included in their version of the superhighway. The quote I remember most from this meeting is, "We need to hear from you now while there's still time to include your concerns."

James Allan Schamus
Independent producer & assistant professor of film theory at Columbia University

When you hear that there will be 500 channels in the near future, don't buy into the rhetoric—there won't be "channels" at all, just a wire going into your home, like the telephone wire. You don't limit the phone calls you make to a predetermined list of numbers supplied by the phone company, so why should you allow the cable company to limit where you might want to dial for audio-visual-textual info and interactions? That's what you allow the cable company to do right now, though. On the flip side, as a mediamaker, why shouldn't you be allowed to send someone your film or video through the wires, just as you send storyboards and drawings via fax and scripts and other data via modem? It's all just digital bits to the phone/cable company, whether those bits translate at the other end into simple sounds or texts or images or whatever. And after all, even when we're calling up grandma to say hello, we're using and creating with (verbal) media.

What's needed is a different regulatory model to extend "public access" into the telephonic realm of "common carriage." You and I have just as much right to pick up the phone and transmit our work as TCI and Time Warner do. And just as you don't need a license to operate a telephone (as opposed to a TV or cable channel), you shouldn't need a license to distribute your films or other works via the network.

Do we in the independent community have the political will and organizational savvy to fight effectively for the preservation and extension of free speech into the electronic future? Certainly a first step will be to convince all Americans that they are already mediamakers when they use the phone, and that it is precisely their free use of the telephonic medium which is at stake in the corporate mergers and political maneuvering that is taking place now.

David Blair
Video artist

I tend to be a bit dubious of video server claims—that in the near term, most films, and even ours, will be available by dial-up, like some sort of fractalized pay-per-view. If that's so near, why are video editors still scared of the rental price for nonlinear editing systems? And why are most of us still hopelessly gathering random evidence of the positive advances in cost and performance? The steadiest info-flow seems to indicate relatively out-of-reach prices for a good while. Nonlinear editing systems have almost the same technology as video servers, and even if the video dialtone and video server distribution system arrives concurrently with affordable nonlinear, servers will still be a *big* investment, and access will be limited for a good while.

The same applies for broad bandwidth to the home. What we're more likely to see in the near term is affordable bandwidth for small businesses. This means, in our case, it will be a production tool—if it is the sort of thing for which you can find a use: if, for instance, you want to work on a large graphics computer located at a distance from your small computer via a fiber-optic link (now as blue sky a service as the video server), or use other server bureau services, or meet in a virtual workspace.

I'm speaking practically, and practicality usually has to do with how you best synergize existing elements into a working system. For lots of folks, the functionality that bandwidth provides can be there just by making the simple jump from 0 to 2400 baud, i.e., first getting online in a real way, discovering e-mail, as well as the infinite USENET, a bulletin board for millions of users on the great wide-area net. Potentially important for some is the slightly more expensive ability to travel (Telnet) to places like MOOs, multi-user on-line conferences which offer private or semi-private meeting places.

Focusing on production, I think that the continuing collapse of post-production tools into a single box—something like Clarisworks for media—will terminally disrupt the dependence on serial style that using a camera, lights, and actors has always half-forced on mediamakers. That element of time-based craft will always be there, but it doesn't have to continue to dominate accidentally.

The camcorder offered a start to an alternative, but we'll get past that, too, solving what's been a big question for many for years: how to edit the 500 hours of tape it makes for you. Easy ownership or rental of integrated systems will finally allow one or two or five people to make long, linear media works (if that is what they wish), which will potentially allow for the creation of a totally new type of publically exhibited cinema: a video-art cinema or a digital arts cinema or whatever you want it to be. Although this is only potential, the means and audience are there—and are growing.

As for distribution: Yes, it is better to fix the new possibilities before they're broke (like PBS). We deserve at least public access and most likely a whole lot more, given that the new distribution systems will first resemble the telephone company, then Mafia-Viacom. As an alternative structure, go and take a look at the Internet, which spontaneously organized from a postnuclear communications scheme into a self-organized and extraordinarily coherent web of first individual then institutional information providers. TV, child of radar, never gave us that chance (i.e., last time, they broke it first).

Jeffrey Chester and Kathryn Montgomery
Executive director & president, Center for Media Education

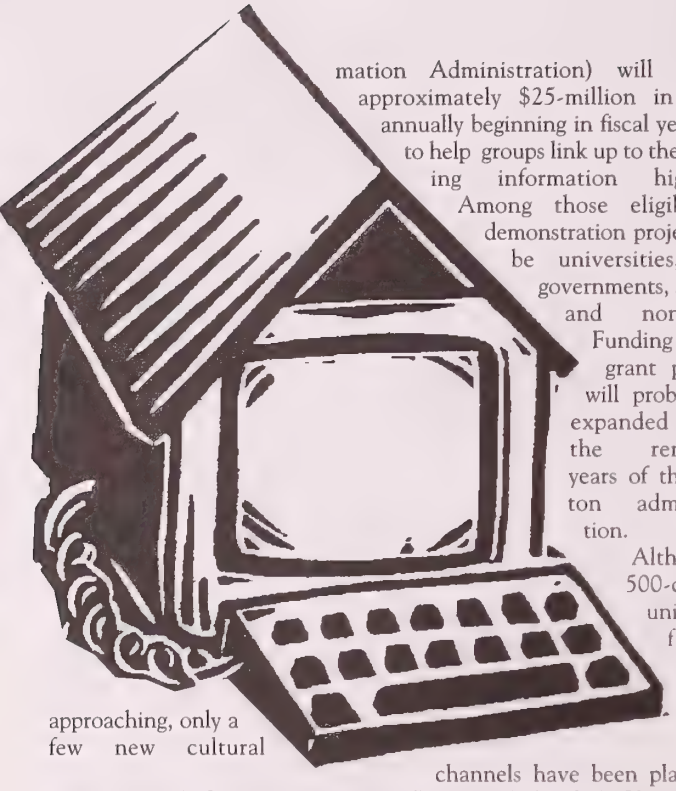
The information superhighway will have profound implications for the arts in America. On the one hand, it could enable them to become a more central part of our culture, increasing the audience, impact, and support for arts organizations. On the other hand, it could bypass the arts community entirely. Arts organizations could find themselves cut off from the new telecommunications networks, like the once thriving towns that withered when they were not connected to the national transportation network by highways or railroads.

While a growing sector of the nonprofit community has begun to focus on this issue, the media-arts community is not involved in the policy debate. One reason is that many organizations have been preoccupied by a series of persistent and well-funded attacks on public financing of the arts and public television. Another reason is that many arts and cultural groups have not understood the implications of this transformation of the communications landscape.

Yet in the next few years, the media-arts community has an excellent opportunity to participate in both the debate and the policymaking over the future of telecommunications. To take advantage of this opportunity, the media-arts community needs to present proposals that will ensure that cultural institutions play a central role in the new information infrastructure. It should also be taking better advantage of new administration programs designed to hasten the development of nonprofit telecommunications networks.

In September, the White House announced the creation of an Information Infrastructure Task Force, which will be made up of approximately 45 government officials and will work with a 25-member citizen advisory group. In addition to developing policies for advanced communications networks, the Task Force will prepare Administration proposals for promoting access to new technologies by the nonprofit community. (Education, health care, and libraries are specifically mentioned by the White House.) It will also tackle intellectual property and copyright issues.

As part of President Clinton's economic stimulus package, the Commerce Department (through its National Telecommunications and Infor-



mation Administration) will provide approximately $25-million in grants annually beginning in fiscal year 1994 to help groups link up to the emerging information highways. Among those eligible for demonstration projects will be universities, local governments, schools, and nonprofits. Funding for this grant program will probably be expanded during the remaining years of the Clinton administration.

Although a 500-channel universe is fast approaching, only a few new cultural channels have been planned—Carter Brown's Ovation service, E.L. Doctorow's Reader's Channel, and the cultural C-SPAN venture being developed by Larry Grossman and public television. It is now clear that if the new information infrastructure is to foster a full range of media-arts-related programming and services, policies supporting such cultural efforts must first be established. These policies could facilitate a diversity of new initiatives including:

- national cultural and information channels run by a consortium of media-arts organizations;
- interactive arts networks that would bring arts education into schools and homes;
- new multicultural services that would allow all Americans to experience the richness of ethnic and cultural diversity in our society;
- a national network that presents the best work of regional arts organizations, such as repertory theaters and media-arts centers;
- virtual galleries and museums that would give patrons access to art from across the world;
- new streams of media and arts funding (supplementing government dollars) designed to support emerging artists and artistic experimentation.

To establish enlightened policies for supporting the media arts in the information age, a number of critical questions need to be explored: Will everyone have access to the infrastructure, or will only the more affluent neighborhoods be fully wired? Will everyone be able to afford essential information? Will a part of the spectrum be reserved for cultural and other nonprofit institutions? These questions are being addressed by a new coalition of nonprofits recently formed to develop a "public-interest vision" for the new telecommunications system.

If we are to successfully promote a public-interest vision for the future information superhighway, a host of essential policy issues must be considered:

A telecommunications civic sector. The telecommunications infrastructure must have a vital civic sector at its core to enable the meaningful participation of all segments of our pluralistic society. Local and national civic networks will be needed to link arts institutions to all Americans.

Nonprofit rates. To guarantee that media-arts institutions have full access to the information superhighway, spectrum space will have to be reserved and special rates created for nonprofits.

New funding for the media arts. Since private corporations will be given the privilege of building and profiting from the new telecommunications network, public policies should mandate a quid pro quo, requiring a spectrum fee or tax on telecommunications services which could help support media-arts and cultural programming.

Safeguards for intellectual property. New policies need to be fashioned to assure the public's access to the broad spectrum of information and programming while protecting the rights of creators.

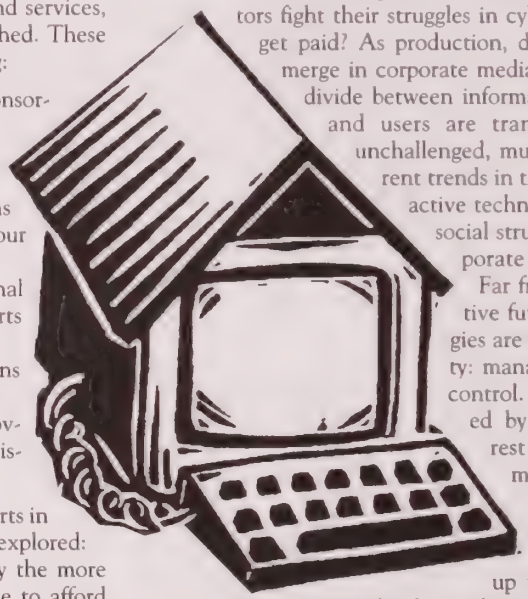
State and local initiatives. Leaders of the media arts community should work together to shape state and local policies for modernizing telecommunications services in order to ensure a central role for the arts. Regulatory proceedings are now underway in Maryland, Pennsylvania, California, and Arkansas.

Media-arts leaders must look beyond immediate policy concerns (such as the reauthorization of the national endowments) and focus on the crucial questions that will determine the future of the arts. If the media-arts community fails to take part in the debate over the information superhighway, the arts will be further marginalized in the 21st century. But if media-arts leaders develop a persuasive vision and work effectively to see that it is implemented, the media arts could be at the heart of the information infrastructure.

Branda Miller

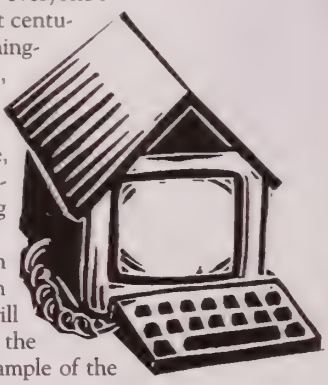
Media artist & associate professor of Integrated Electronic Arts at Rensselear Polytechnic Institute

Will accelerating technologies offer a revolutionary shift of power from institutions to individuals, with expanded creativity, ideas, and choice on demand? In our transition from the industrial age to the information age, the immediate and demanding pressure to focus on the *changing* technologies distracts us from *that which has not changed*: dominant relations of power.



How will independent artists, community activists, and educators fight their struggles in cyberspace? How will they pay and get paid? As production, distribution, and delivery systems merge in corporate media mega-monopolies, communities divide between information rich and information poor, and users are transformed into consumers. Left unchallenged, multimedia is a powerful tool: Current trends in the development and sale of interactive technologies will reinforce pre-existing social structures and the continuity of corporate and consumer infrastructures. Far from promising a glorious interactive future, interactive media technologies are being developed for inter-passivity: management, surveillance, and social control. These superhighways are protected by police and have predesignated rest stops; choice is redefined as a menu with a glossy design but limited selections.

To stay current with commercial production values and keep up with marketing and distribution networks, few paths exist off the beaten track. How will independent voices and education be subsidized? What affect will the economy of information have on democratic structures and cultural values?



Access centers that are low cost and for everyone's use will be the battlefronts of the twenty-first century. The sites of struggles for free flow of meaningful information will be in artists' spaces, media centers, community organizations, schools, libraries, and alternative distribution networks. With an eye to the future, independents can position themselves in collective, collaborative, and self-empowering ways through education and action.

We must not sell our souls as we focus on technology. If we merely try to keep up with corporate media models and values, we will expend all of our energy on keeping up with the latest media-technology products. As an example of the

underlying cancer in our education, schools get wired with television hardware in exchange for the delivery of mass-produced history lessons (a la Whittle Communications). With market shares being the basic concern, in not only corporate but academic institutions, slick MacDonalds-like messages glue passive pupils to their monitor-mentors. When computer-supported technology for learning substitutes for teachers and human interaction and images replace reading, information becomes pollution.

We need to refocus on *what we can learn* with technology, balancing media literacy with techno-literacy. We must consider what information is (and what it is not) and how it affects political, social, and educational institutions. Armed with a healthy sense of skepticism, we cannot be dazzled or intimidated by it as we develop competence with the multimedia tools.



Only then can we decide how technology can fit into what we do, and how we can use it to think and act independently and self-sufficiently, augmenting human capabilities and intellect. With basic concerns shifted to creativity, innovation, and discovery, alternative ideas and visions can thrive, empowering communities and independent voices. Our survival cannot be linked to blind imitations of corporate models in the communications environment. There is no substitute for the continued development of an independent awareness and aesthetic.

Timothy Gunn
Executive Director, National Video Resources

The mission of National Video Resources (NVR) is to assist in the distribution of independent film and video. We believe the visions expressed in these works are important to public discourse in our society. For the first few years of our existence (we were established by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1990) our activities in support of this mission centered almost entirely around the distribution of videocassettes. After all, the rapid proliferation of VCRs and 1/2" cassettes had emerged as the "new technology" to which independent producers and distributors were forced to adapt.

Today, any number of media-technology observers are predicting that the VCR and the cassette may soon become technological curiosities along with the filmstrip machine. We don't agree: If for no other reason than the massive base of VCRs already installed in our homes and institutions, cassettes will survive as an important mode of distribution for years.

Yet it's undeniable that the media landscape is undergoing dramatic changes. Today the revolution in viewing habits launched by home video is giving way to a telecommunications revolution that promises to alter the way information is disseminated and used. In its most visionary form, the future will not simply be about having more channels to watch—it will affect how we work, play, think, learn, consume, and how we interact with one another, our public and private institutions. Like the home video revolution, however, this new telecommunications system—whatever its shape—raises important issues about the availability and diversity of viewpoints and the access to the system by information providers and users.

Against this backdrop of dramatic change, NVR has adopted a number of strategies to help independent producers and distributors understand and navigate through the new technology production and distribution systems. First, we will provide information to the field on changing technological, funding, and market opportunities related to the new technologies, through *NVR Reports* and other publications and seminars.

Second, we want to support a market environment in which individual and institutional consumers have ready access to material produced by independents and distributed through the emerging technologies. Virtually all the projected systems are designed to maximize commercial revenues, an approach that has traditionally excluded all but the most mass market programming. In the emerging consumer media market, opportunities for any but the most commercial works may not mature until after the new technologies are fully in place and consumers are ready to explore alternative viewing options. There may, however, be areas in which independent work can be included in early demonstration projects used for market tests and, possibly, stake a position on future program menus.

Finally, we want to work for a public policy environment supportive of independent production and distribution. The independent community is too small to significantly alter the consumer marketplace or the technology for the new communication systems, but public policy is one area that independents can help shape, especially if they form partnerships with the larger public interest community which includes the educational, civic, and nonprofit sectors. NVR will inform the field about any emerging policies related to the new delivery systems and will work to help form strategic partnerships between the independent community and public interest organizations to influence policy on issues affecting the field.

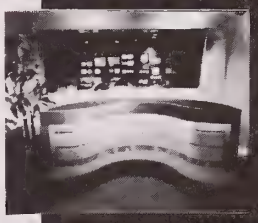
Anthony T. Riddle
Executive Director, Minneapolis Telecommunications Network & Chair, Alliance for Community Media

Everything is digital; digital is everything. Anything reduced to numbers is more easily manipulated, whether product or people. Image manipulation is being brought within reach of the independent producer. Computers are used not only as a tool for manipulating images, but for developing new tools. The tools are being miniaturized, improved, and made cheaper. A $100 computer has $100,000 worth of effects.

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Mass distribution of means: The miniaturization of means will distribute credible production possibilities on a mass scale. Desktop production is following desktop publishing. Random-access editing will be in the $10,000 range within a year. This mass distribution of means will make possible more personal statements by independent producers. As has been seen in cable-access centers, the ready availability of cheap production tools leads to more experimentation. Take a chance—if you fail, what have you lost?

The image has become more plastic. The interior dialogue is overtaking the pseudo-objective reality of early film. Events which clearly cannot take place in the *real* world are increasingly depicted using digital techniques. Film and video imagery takes on the plasticity formerly found only in the word.

However, the same technical forces working on the low-end of production operate on the upper ends as well. The field will continue to be dominated by highly financed studios using ever improved technical capabilities to leverage their position in the market. Whatever you can do technically, they can do better.

Mass distribution will be affected by mass systems: I expect that there will be a huge amount of channel capacity available in the new distribution system. Most of it will be wasted on controlled, profit-oriented information, as it is now. However, there will be more direct contact with audiences by independents than before. Freedom will be in abundance, short-lived though it may be.

Independents can take advantage of the situation by becoming more familiar with the new technology. Go digital. Keep an open mind. The new mass markets will be marked by highly segmented demographics. Communities will be identifiable by ideas rather than geographical boundaries. Well-targeted works will find audiences—if they can break through the white noise.

In this sense, the best thing an independent can do is stop being so independent; independence in conception, not in action. Groups of independents with similar interests must come together. First, we must work actively with groups like the Alliance for Community Media to protect the public's access to new distribution systems. Second, we must band together under recognizable, marketable banners to provide an address for those who need to hear the unique voices included in this one-note symphony.



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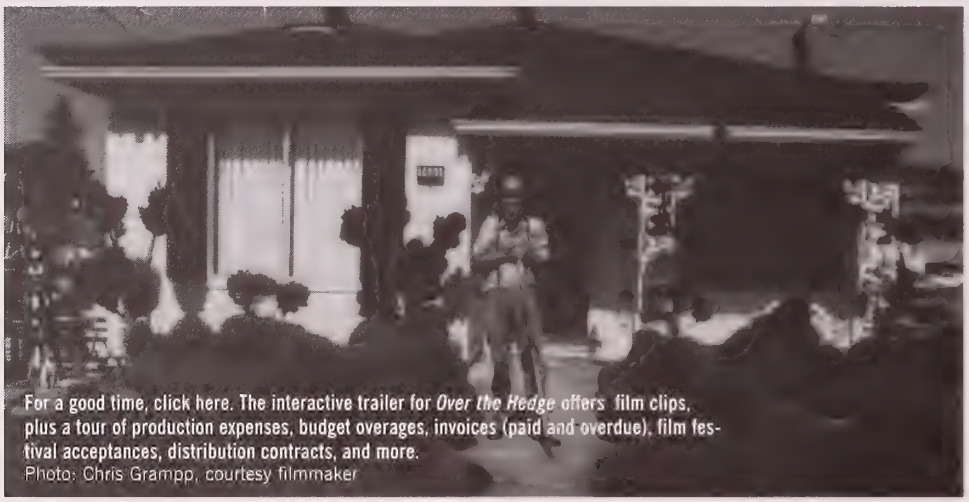
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K.D. Davis, Barton Weiss, & Barbara Hammer

LIFE IN THE NONLINEAR LANE

AFI's Digital Independence Workshop

Sit down, boot up, and enter the digitized topiary gardens of *Over the Hedge*. Click on the woman peeking through the shrubs and she'll offer commentary on her newly-trimmed suburban lawn. Select from the pom-pom hedges, poodles, pyramids, and sombrero-shaped shrubbery on screen and you can access a series of digitized video clips.



For a good time, click here. The interactive trailer for *Over the Hedge* offers film clips, plus a tour of production expenses, budget overages, invoices (paid and overdue), film festival acceptances, distribution contracts, and more.
Photo: Chris Grampp, courtesy filmmaker

This interactive digital trailer was designed to promote my short documentary film *Over the Hedge*. Production time for the trailer: about 24 hours. Production staff: two people, plus technical support from a small group of knowledgeable programming assistants, eager to aid new-tech slowpokes like me.

Over the Hedge was just one of the many multimedia projects produced at the American Film Institute's (AFI) Advanced Technology lab in December during its first Digital Independence workshop. For four days, 15 independent filmmakers sat in a quiet circle, backs turned toward one another. A bank of Macintosh Quadras, color monitors, image digitizers, and computer workstations lined the walls, constituting the virtual playground which, for that week, became our production lab and thinktank.

According to Advanced Technology staff directors Dana Atchley, Harry Mott, and Nick DeMartino, the Digital Independence workshop uses the model of the conservatory to offer a creative and collaborative environment in which producers and writers at all levels of computer literacy could interface with digital media. From a pool of several dozen applicants, 15 independent film- and videomakers were selected from around the country for this one-time crash course in new technology. There is some hope at AFI that the workshop will be offered again, but at present nothing has been scheduled.

Documentary producers, animators, narrative filmmakers, and experimental video artists brought the analog tools of their trade. Film and video clips, photographs, drawings, texts, and audio materials were pulled from bags and boxes, then scanned and digitized in preparation for their computer manipulation through Adobe Photoshop and Premiere software.

Seated to my right was veteran documentarian Les Blank, who brought some sample video material from his work-in-progress *The Maestro: King of the Cowboy Artists*. Blank had also, admittedly, brought a bad case of technophobia. Unfamiliar with digital media and nearly computer-illiterate to boot, he was feeling caught in the crossdraft as the proverbial winds of technological change blew by. When Blank heard about AFI's Digital Independence program, he thought he would familiarize himself with some of these new tools in order to expand and revitalize his work.

Did he get what he wanted? For Blank, Photoshop and Premiere seemed reasonable tools for documentary work, particularly in their ability to alleviate some of the sheer tedium of postproduction. The capacity to perform hundreds of optical effects in the desktop editing program Premiere—and see the results instantaneously—was one of the main justifications Blank offered for continuing to work digitally.

However, he expressed little initial enthusiasm for expanding his documentary work in the direction of interactive multimedia. "If I were a painter," Blank said, "I suspect I would want to focus on just one single canvas, instead of painting three at the same time, with one stacked right on top of the next." Nonetheless, he acknowledged the potential of interactivity to give users the opportunity to explore selected areas of interest in greater depth. "I have always wanted to find some way to incorporate outtakes into my films," Blank confessed. Interactive documentaries "might be pretty good for those filmmakers who'd rather be writing encyclopedias," he deadpanned.

Although I personally have no great love for encyclopedias, at Digital Independence I discovered that the interactive form can be well-suited for a new type of movie trailer. In my *Over the Hedge* trailer (programmed in MacroMind Director), film clips are sampled at will, brought up onscreen in a Quicktime video window. Other clickable icons offer behind-the-scenes information about the film's production and distribution, including a slideshow tour of production expenses, budget overages, invoices (both paid and overdue), film festival acceptances, stacks of rejection letters, distribution contracts, and press reviews.

Unlike Blank and me, experimental video artists Valerie Soe and Linda Gibson came to the Digital Independence program fairly Mac-literate. Nonetheless, having been economically restricted (like many independents) to cuts-only systems, they were pleased to discover the multiple effects capabilities of the editing software, which permit evocative and powerful scene transitions. Both artists digitized personal and archival source material—footage of a cross-country drive, family photos, etc. Premiere's capacity to animate and superimpose text allowed them to nicely counterpoint the digitized imagery in their pieces.

On the down side, Gibson expressed frustration at the length of time spent waiting for preview sequences to assemble and play (a function of the computers' limited memory and storage capacity). There was also the matter of the small screen size of Quicktime video windows (another memory limitation), as well as its inadequate sound/image synch capability.

San Francisco Bay area videomaker Tim Blaskovich came to the workshop with travel footage of China. During his four days at AFI, he digitized, arranged, and treated the visual sequences, then added narration and audio tracks over the imagery. The result was a 20-minute, personal, impressionistic work. Blaskovich compared his first in-depth exploration of nonlinear desktop editing to "something like a blend of fin-

gerpainting and connect-the-dots" in terms of its spontaneity and control.

Like many low-budget mediamakers, Blaskovich, Soe, and Gibson all raised important questions about affordable access to new media for low-budget producers. This is an issue that not only concerns the tools of production, but also impacts channels of distribution and exhibition. Nonetheless, Soe has decided to begin an interactive CD-ROM project this year—if she can secure access to the necessary hardware and software. After Digital Independence, new filmmaker and workshop participant Martyne Page remained highly ambivalent about making digital technologies central to her work. "We like to focus on the future, but does that mean that we have truly exhausted our old ways of working, that the limits of filmmaking practice as we know it necessitate this technological leap?" Among this group of independent mediamakers it appears the jury is still hung.

K.D. Davis

The primary tool of AFI's digital storytelling workshop was Adobe Premiere 3.0, a video editing program for the Macintosh. While the cost of the program is cheap (about $400), it takes a major Mac and lots of space on your hard drive in order to work.

Premiere is a stylistic departure from most digital nonlinear editing systems on the market. Avid systems, and all of their imitators, use an interface and methodology that emulates film and video editing: You put shots in bins; you log your footage. Premiere, on the other hand, works more like most Mac programs. It's basically a cut and paste approach. You pick your shots, assemble them, rearrange them if you like, then alter them.

While Avid can perform a limited number of effects, they are tangential to the heart of the program. Not so with Premiere. This creates a different mindset: The film/video-trained editor focuses on placing the right shot in the right place, while the Premiere editor focuses on what to do with the shots once they are there. To the traditional editor, this might seem like adding cheesy effects. But Premiere is as much an image-processing machine as an editor. It accommodates 99 chan-

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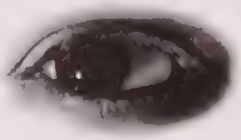
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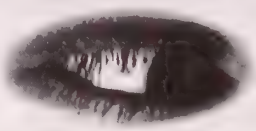
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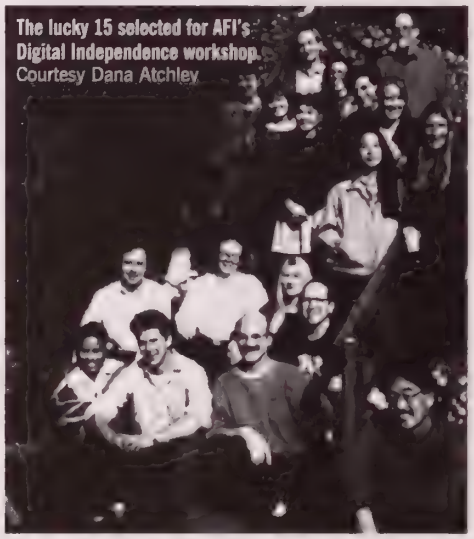
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nels of image overlays, has about as many effects as a Video Toaster, does ADO-style title moves, and has a host of filter effects similar to those in Mac graphic programs like Adobe Photoshop.

Premiere is as close as you can get to future proof because, unlike proprietary systems like the AVID, it integrates with many hardware digitizing packages. This means you can easily export the video into a host multimedia or image-processing software package and then import it back to Premiere.

Premiere will undoubtedly become the predominant tool for both low-end independents and a host of people who have never worked in media before. The



The lucky 15 selected for AFI's Digital Independence workshop. Courtesy Dana Atchley

important thing here is that any change in technology will produce a change in aesthetic. This program—and others that will no doubt follow in its wake—employs a graphically-based editing system. The most successful of the projects in the AFI workshop mixed text with graphics, often using first-person narration. Perhaps Premiere will encourage the production of this kind of visually layered work, more so than traditional documentary or narrative approaches.

What was most hopeful about Digital Independence was seeing a new tool that might bring back experimental cinema. The joy is that, at a relatively inexpensive price, artists can have real control of their medium. Premiere's low cost and intuitive approach may also encourage all kinds of video novices to jump into the field. This could mean a lot of bad video, but so many more independents.

BARTON WEISS

"After Nick DeMartino told the NAMAC conference last June that the American Film Institute would be offering independent mediamakers the opportunity to be trained in digital technology, I avidly watched for the chance to apply."

Once in the Digital Independence workshop, the chance to use desktop video—scanning and digitizing artwork one moment, editing a multiple-layered image and sound text the next—was exhilarating. I felt I'd finally found the media that matched my working methods.

In the past, I'd hang 16mm strips of picture and sound in a bin and reach intuitively for the next piece to lay in. This was akin to an assembly edit in video, although I could put a shot in between (like an insert edit) and, with lots of adjusting, make it work. Using Adobe Premiere software to make a Quicktime movie, I had small icon pictures of my available image bank, a second directory of icons for pictures with sound, and a third indicating sounds without images. Select an icon, and it would immediately become a shot in the movie. I could repeat, stretch, or shrink the shot, change the frame rate, layer 24 sounds below it, choose multiple effects, preview, then select or discard them—all using my intuitive editing strategy. Best of all, it was fun. I could work quickly, try out ideas, and make instant decisions. I could add images by recording Hi8 images and

sound, digitizing them, and immediately have them to use.

For my three-minute Quicktime movie, meant to be part of an autobiographical feature, I first digitized my source material: stills of Shirley Temple; Hi8 video shot from a flatbed of 16mm optically printed film of my parents in the thirties; black-and-white stills of me in high school; Hi8 video shot that morning of Hollywood Boulevard; Shirley Temple's foot- and hand-prints at Mann's Chinese Theater; and the mirrored elevator and "History of Motion Pictures" display at the historic Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. Then, in a deep voice for the film's voiceover, I detailed the amount of money Shirley Temple was making the year I was born (more than any other living female), the number of products named after her, and how she single-handedly saved the 20th Century Fox studio from decline.

With a more personal voice I recounted how my mother took me to a Hollywood audition at age 5, having decided that I was definitely as cute and talented as Ms. Temple. While, sadly, my mother died many years ago, I finally was in Hollywood. At the end of the Quicktime movie, I collapsed shots of Shirley and me while zooming in on the AFI logo (a star inside a film strip) asking, "Am I a star now, Mom?"

This multilayered three-minute piece was put together in two days—one digitizing the material (in three hours) and another creating the piece. Working with Premiere was so fast that I also had time to create a 60-second safer-sex spot on the workshop's third day.

As I raced away from AFI to catch my plane back to San Francisco, I wondered if I'd ever see my movie again. I didn't even own a Macintosh, let alone the top-of-the-line equipment necessary for playback. Moving images still consume an inordinate amount of computer memory. My three minutes took up so much memory that storage required one 44 mg and two 105 mg Syquest cartridges. Home for three weeks with still no movie to show, I finally went over to the studio of AFI teacher Dana Atchley, who began his own Quicktime home movie workshops in March in San Francisco. Atchley kindly helped me download Shirley Temple and Me from his hard drive to VHS video dubs. But, for filmmakers, there's the rub: 250 video lines of information only. As a filmmaker who enjoys using multimedia software, but who also wants to take advantage of the full range of highly-defined and beautiful color negative stock, I am sure I'm not alone in wanting a 16mm film transfer output for my creative computer work. Please provide.

BARBARA HAMMER

K.D. Davis' works include the films Over the Hedge, Best Offer, and an interactive laserdisc piece, What's On Your Mind, Buddy? She is currently in production with director Jonathan Robinson on the film A Dialogue with Society. Barton Weiss is an award-winning video/filmmaker, director of the Dallas Video Festival, and a member of the AIVF board. Barbara Hammer, also an the AIVF board, toured New Zealand last month with Nitrate Kisses and is working an a feature autobiography, Tender Buttons.

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BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

SLEEPLESS IN ESPANA

THE VALLADOLID INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



The stately Teatro Calderón, site of the competition screenings at Spain's Valladolid Film Festival.
Photo: Hélène Caux

As a van full of jet-lagged out-of-towners pulled into Valladolid last October for the city's annual film festival, Frank Sinatra could be heard crooning over the radio speakers that he wanted to wake up in a city that never sleeps.

As a New Yorker who had captured few winks during the lengthy plane ride overseas, I found the sequence particularly amusing. Little did I know at the time, however, that the familiar tune would gain new meaning in the week that followed.

Located about two hours north of Madrid in the Castille region of Spain, the city of Valladolid, with a population of 350,000, plays host each fall to a nine-day, around-the-clock fiesta for filmmakers, journalists, and a smattering of European buyers, distributors, and festival directors.

More than 500 invited guests flock each year to the industrialized city—known both for its university and its historical significance as the capital of Spain during the reign of Phillip II—to view a variety of short and feature films, documentaries, tributes, and retrospectives. Many who have attended the festival describe it as "well organized" and "efficient," words not usually associated with a country that shuts down for several hours each afternoon while its siesta-relishing natives drop out of sight. Unlike larger European festivals, Valladolid has no market; instead the 38-year-old festival, held at nine venues around the city, focuses on exposing cinema-conscious locals to unfamiliar works. Why, then, should U.S. makers trek across the Atlantic for the festival? Aside from experiencing the unceasing Spanish hospitality, makers are attracted by the prize money. For a small festival, the payoffs are large: $375,000 (3 million pesetas) to the top film in competition and close to $70,000 (half a million pesetas) each for Best Short and Best Documentary.

The 300-plus offerings, all of which are Spanish premieres, include works from Europe, Iran, Latin America, and the U.S. In 1993, the festival's documentary section featured a number of works from the States, although most had premiered earlier in the year in Berlin or other European festivals. Robert Levi's *Duke Ellington*, Roger Weisberg's *Road Scholar*, Mark Rappaport's *Rock Hudson's Home Movies* and Nina Miles and Bill Rosenblum's *Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts in World War II* were among the films screened.

The top documentary prize went to French director Nicolas Philibert's *Le Pays des Sourds*, an exploration of deafness. But when the festival's jury awarded *Liberators* Honorable Mention, several Canadian and European makers who had heard about the controversy surrounding the documentary's veracity ["Too Little, Too Late? Miles and Rosenblum Defend *Liberators*' Accuracy," June 1993] were outraged. They took their case to the seven-member international jury, which included former *Los Angeles Times* critic Charles Champlin, and urged them to rescind the prize. According to the makers, the jurors responded they were unaware of the controversy and declined to take back the honor.

Unlike the documentary section, the festival's Sección Oficial, or Competition, was short on independent features from the U.S. The commercial *Searching for Bobby Fisher* was the country's sole hope for the festival's top honor, the Golden Spike. When asked why the U.S. was so poorly represented in competition, festival director Fernando Lara replied, "The festival received a lot of proposals from both independents and the major studios, but this year there was really nothing extraordinary, nothing marvellous." During a rare mid-festival interview, Lara explained from the marble-and-smoked-glass lobby of the four-star Hotel Olid Melea—temporary home to visiting filmmakers and journalists—that he attends the Berlin International Film Festival each February to scout out new works from the U.S.

Ten of the 15 films in competition were Western European, including Peter Schroder's *Stolen Spring* (Denmark), Jean Maboeuf's *Petain* (France), and Hans Hykelma's *Oereg* (Netherlands), while the

East, like the U.S., had a sole representative: Polish director Andrzej Wajda's *Perscionek Z Orlem W Koronie*. If the section was not balanced in terms of geography, nor was it in terms of directorial experience. Newcomers like Canadian David Wellington (*I Love a Man in Uniform*) found themselves competing for top honors against heavy hitters such as the U.K.'s Stephen Frears (*The Snapper*) and Italian Ettore Scola (*Mario, Maria e Mario*).

For Robert Boyd, a Canadian living in Manhattan whose English-language film *South of Wawa* was screened in competition, the event was nerve-wracking. "The audience didn't seem to understand what was happening. They didn't respond at all to the humor in the film." For others, however, the screenings were a treat. The stately Teatro Calderón, with its red velvet interior and prime location in the center of Valladolid's old city, added to the festive nature of the event, as did the hundreds of university students who, dressed in red and blue uniforms, worked as hostesses and translators.

Several of the features and documentaries screened during the festival offered English speakers either subtitles or simultaneous translation, but, despite the event's billing as "international," it catered primarily to Spaniards. There were few English-speaking filmmakers and journalists present; the small group, including Canadian documentarian



Actress Julie Brown (left) represented Ken Loach's *Raining Stones* at this year's festival.
Courtesy filmmaker

Harry Rasky (*The War Against the Indians*) and Dutch filmmaker Marijke JongBloed (*The Next Step*), found each other quickly. The press conferences conducted in English routinely featured Spanish-speaking translators, but the reverse was not the case.

Created in 1956, Valladolid began as a festival of religious cinema then, in later years, helped acquaint Spanish audiences with directorial legends such as Ingmar Bergman, Luis Buñuel, and Federico Fellini. When Fernando Lara, a former film critic, took over as festival director in 1984, he completely restructured the event to include a wider variety of films, including works from local film schools. In 1993, Lara organized numerous retrospectives, including one on Canadian cinema and another on the works

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of Spanish novelist Miguel Delibes. He was, however, particularly proud of a tribute to Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami, who was present in Valladolid. "Kiarostami is very well known in France," said Lara, "but not at all in Spain. I hope this is one of the things people remember most about this year's festival."

It will probably be. Another will be the wildly spirited natives of Valladolid, whose streets are lined with more tapas bars per square foot than far larger cities. Most nights bands of university students sang and laughed outside my hotel window until long after sunrise.

With a budget of $1 million, Valladolid is far smaller than San Sebastian's annual film festival, which has four times the budget. But Lara does not view them as competitors. "They are very different," he said. "San Sebastian focuses more on cinema as industry. Valladolid has more of a cultural emphasis. We look to discover new directors and cinematographers."

This year's recipient of the festival's Golden Spike is a case in point. Serio Cabrera's *La Estrategia de Caracol (The Strategy of the Snail)*, about a group of evicted tenants who seek the wisdom of an exiled Spanish anarchist, was the only Colombian film in competition. *The Snapper* received two prizes: the Silver Spike and the award for Best Actress (Tina Kellegher). The Best Actor award went to Gian Maria Volontè, an Italian film legend, who was also present in Valladolid. Several members of the Spanish press corps were surprised, however, that Volontè, who won the award for his role in the Spanish feature *Tirano Banderas*, did not speak a word of their language. Directed by José Luis García Sánchez, *Banderas*, about a tyrannical dictator (a la Generalissimo Francisco Franco) who rules over an imaginary South American country, was the one Spanish film screened in competition. Although visually striking, the film offered one-dimensional characters and a predictable storyline. Far more interesting were the films featured in the festival's annual Spanish sidebar, including Bigas Luna's *Jamón, Jamón*, the story of a spirited woman who meets up with an impetuous delivery van driver; Fernando Trueba's lavish *Belle Epoque*, about a father's relationship with his four daughters during the collapse of the Spanish monarchy in 1931; and, a pleasant surprise for many festival attendees, Manueal Iborra's *Orquesta Club Virginia*. With its quirky narrative style, the film, set in the 1960s, centered on a teenage boy's relationship with his philandering musician father.

As I boarded the flight after nine days of moviegoing, sumptous local seafood and grilled meats, and late-night taverna hopping, I wanted nothing more than to wake up in a city that appreciated the value of a good night's sleep.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

BY STEPHEN M. GOLDSTEIN

The Money Lenders: Loans vs. Limited Partnerships



You have just spent six months raising the money you need to begin production. You've already written the script, worked out the budget, and blocked out the production schedule. And now, after speaking with every friend, contact, and relative you have (and some you did not know even existed), you have commitments for funds sufficient to begin filming. But before you move ahead, there is at least one matter that your attorney will insist you work out: your deals with investors. The following are some typical means of structuring such deals, along with a discussion of points you'll need to consider.

The most common deal structures fall into one of two categories: (1) loans made by one or more individuals, or (2) a partnership, either general or limited. Under the loan scenario, your investors agree to lend specific amounts of money, to be repaid with interest, at an agreed-upon date. Under a partnership, the investors invest their money in exchange for some interest in the project, usually represented by a percentage of profits generated by the film. Each approach has its advantages and disadvantages. The form you select will depend, in large part, on the sophistication of the investors and what they demand in return for their money.

Loan Funding

One of the biggest advantages of loan funding is that it allows the producer to retain all rights to the project. Contrast this with the partnership arrangement, under which the producer must give up some percentage of the profits, or with pre-sales, when the right to sell the film in certain markets is sold off. The loan funding tradeoff, of course, is that lenders expect to be repaid.

Does this mean the producer must sell the family heirlooms if the film is not a success? Not necessarily. If the producer or borrower is a corporation (as opposed to an individual or a partnership), only the corporation's assets can be claimed by the investor in the event of a loan default. A producer can easily form a corporation for less than $1,000 (depending on the state in which he or she incorporates).

The loan should be documented by a loan agreement, which sets forth the terms of the loan, and the loan note, which evidences the borrower's obligation to repay the loan. The agreement need not be complicated; in fact, the terms can be incorporated in the note, thus eliminating the need for a separate agreement. The agreement and/or note should set forth the time of repayment and the interest rate. In addition, it should address the issue of assignability (i.e., whether the lender can assign his or her right of repayment to another person or entity). Keep in mind: you may feel comfortable with your investors and may even have an informal (though not binding) understanding with them that they will not require repayment if the film is unsuccessful. But without a clause prohibiting assignment, the investor could sell the note to another person, leaving you to deal with a stranger—possibly someone who might not be as forgiving as the original investor.

In negotiating the loan terms, keep in mind that at some point you may need to borrow additional funds to complete the project. Since a new lender might, as a condition to make the loan, demand seniority (the right to be paid prior to the original lenders), the loan agreement should permit you to borrow new funds on whatever terms you deem reasonable (including terms giving the new lender seniority). If your investors object to such a clause, an alternative would be to grant them the right to lend any additional sums which may be required. Only if they opt not to provide such additional funds would you have the right to borrow further sums from a new lender under terms giving the lender senior rights.

Other issues to address are the right to prepay the loan and which state's law will govern the loan agreement. An additional item to consider is the timing of the loan.

Generally the loan agreement or note is signed at the time the funds are advanced. However, if the money is to be paid over time, or only once certain events occur (i.e., only when some minimum amount of money has been raised, or only if a particular individual agrees to work on the project), the parties would need to spell this out. Then, only when the money is actually advanced would the loan note be signed.

Funding via Partnership

While you might prefer to borrow the production money, your investors may not be willing to fund the project if their return is limited to the repayment of the principal plus some agreed-upon rate of interest. Rather, they may want to share any of the profits the film generates. This typically is achieved by the formation of a limited partnership, in which the producer, or some entity he or she controls, acts as general partner, and the investors purchase interests as limited partners. Under such an arrangement the limited partnership owns rights to and produces the film, while the general partner (the producer) makes decisions for and acts on behalf of the rest. The limited

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partners are, in essence, passive investors having little or no say over partnership decisions. What they are entitled to is a percentage of partnership profits.

Most of this aspect can be achieved through a general partnership. The crucial difference is that, in a general partnership, all partners are personally liable for partnership obligations, and generally have a say in partnership decisions. In a limited partnership, limited partners have no authority to act on behalf of the partnership, and have no risk beyond their investment. Be aware, however, that the general partner within a limited partnership remains liable for all partnership obligations. As a result, many general partners are themselves corporations.

Special attention must be paid to the provisions of the partnership agreement enumerating the powers of the general partner. For instance, the right of the general partner to admit additional limited partners to raise more money must be addressed. Unless specifically granted such right in the partnership agreement, many states (such as New York) require the consent of all existing partners. Another provision to consider including is one granting the limited partners the right to participate in future projects. This is often used to make investments more enticing, as it gives investors a sense of continuing participation in the producer's projects—no doubt an important incentive for investment.

In setting the profit split, partnership agreements typically will provide that a greater percentage (anywhere from 50 to 99 percent) goes to the limited partners until they are paid back. Thereafter, the amount payable to the general partner often increases. With this system, the investors are assured they have priority with respect to first distributable profits.

If the partnership suffers losses in any year, each partner, limited and general, will be allocated that percentage of losses as is provided for in the partnership agreement. Before the 1986 tax changes, limited partnerships were often used as tax shelters, largely because of their ability to pass through tax losses, which often exceeded the amount invested. While losses still pass through to the partners, the ability to make use of them is now limited. The tax rules governing this area are complicated, and should be reviewed carefully by qualified counsel.

There is a simpler variation of the limited partnership agreement. Under this kind of agreement, the producer agrees to pay the investor some percentage of profits in exchange for the investor's funds. The investor would not own any interest in the project. but would instead have a contractual right to payment should the film turn a profit. Such an agreement has the advantage of being easier, and less expensive, to draft and typically would not be subject to the securities law discussed below. The downside for the investor is that the rights granted are

likely to be more limited than under a limited partnership agreement, and the write-off of any losses would be delayed or possibly eliminated. Thus, the use of this simpler agreement will depend to a great extent on its acceptability to the investor.

Application of Securities Laws

The sale of limited partnership interests is considered to be the sale of a security (i.e., an ownership or other interest in an entity managed by other individuals). It is, therefore, subject to both federal and state securities law. While the general rule is that securities must be registered before they can be offered for sale, federal securities allow for certain exemptions. The one most commonly used is known as Regulation D. While it enables the offer and sale of securities without the onerous registration requirements of a public offering, there are still certain rules which must be complied with, which vary depending on the size of the offering. Among these rules are limits on the number of investors; the manner in which they may be solicited; and the type of information that must be provided to potential investors. Also integral to a Regulation D offering is the rule that the investor can not invest in the limited partnership with an intent to resell his or her interest. Thus, all investors must agree that their interests can not be resold or transferred except in limited circumstances. In short, they are stuck with their investment.

Complying with Regulation D is not always simple, and failure to do so can have serious consequences for producers. For instance, a producer might unwittingly breach the prohibition against advertising by seeking investors through an ad in a magazine. In addition to facing monetary penalties, the producer might be precluded from future use of Regulation D to raise funds.

The sale of securities is also governed by state law. Although most states have exemptions from registration similar to Regulation D, the rules regarding exemptions vary. For example, some states require that certain filings be made before any interests are sold or even offered. Check with an attorney for the specifics in your area.

This discussion of loans and partnerships does not by any means exhaust the methods by which enterprising producers have raised funds for their ventures. While perhaps more difficult to arrange, pre-sales are still a viable option, particularly when a portion of the funding has been raised. Grants and foundation money also remain a source of funding for many producers, although they are not easy to obtain in the best of times and have become shrinking pots in recent years. And so it is that, for purposes of maintaining maximum flexible and control over one's projects, loans and partnerships are still the recommended options.

STEPHEN M. GOLDSTEIN

Stephen M. Goldstein is an entertainment attorney practicing in New York City.

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BY MITCH ALBERT



The controversial photographs of Sally Mann are the subject of *Blood Ties*, the Academy Award nominated documentary by Mark Mori and Steven Cantor.
© Sally Mann, courtesy Houk Friedman Galley, NYC

Mark Mori and Steven Cantor's documentary **Blood Ties** (30 min., 16mm & video) was screened at Sundance and several other fests before receiving an Academy Award nomination. The film studies the work of photographer Sally Mann. Haunting, complex, and controversial, Mann's photos evoke the soulful, least 'childlike' aspects of childhood, with her own children as subjects. The film features a score by rock poets R.E.M. *Blood Ties*, Mark Mori Media, Box 29314, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (213) 469-1145; fax 9027.

News from the front: Margaret Bruen's **The Fourth Green Field** (96 min., 16mm) documents human rights abuses in British-occupied Northern Ireland. Filmed in so-called "subversive" neighborhoods, including Belfast, the film contains testimony from victims of abuse and commentary by well-known activists. The film explores such issues as arrest and detention procedures, riot control, and shoot-to-kill policies. Featured music includes songs by inmates of Long Kesh Prison, The Chieftains, and Tommy Makem. *The Fourth Green Field*, Canoe Productions, 162 Sixth St., Hoboken, NJ; (201) 795-4408.

Of course, brutality is not limited to the British force in Ireland: the police force in Chicago has gotten points in that category, too. Peter Kuttner, Cyndi Moran, and Eric Scholl take a hard look at **The End of the Nightstick** (54 min., VHS). For 20 years, the Chicago press and authorities tolerated white police commander Jon Burge's predilection for torturing African-American suspects. Burge's methods included Russian Roulette, genital electroshock, and other cruelties. Made in conjunction with Community TV Network (an organization that has provided video production training to more than 1,800 minority Chicago youth since 1974), the documentary follows years of strategy and protest by local activists that led to the purge of Burge from the force. *The End of the Nightstick*, Community TV Network, 2035 W. Wabansia, Chicago, IL 60647; (312) 278-8500.

More Eire with **From Shore to Shore** (57 min., VHS), as director and producer Patrick Mullins traces the evolution of traditional Irish music in New York. The documentary mixes historic photographs and film footage with contemporary interviews and performances. It examines the influence of family, community, Irish immigration, and American popular culture on the traditional Irish music played in New York today. *From Shore to Shore*, Cherry Lane Productions, Box 366, Truckee, CA 96160.

Guess who's coming to lunch? In **My Lunch with Quentin Crisp** (29 min., S-8, Hi8 to Beta), June Lang dines with the eponymous gentleman in an unscripted, unrehearsed encounter. As the champagne flows, the 'real Quentin' is brought forth, witty, wild, and wonderful. *My Lunch with Quentin Crisp*, June Lang, Tigress Productions, 245 W. 51 St. #703, NY, NY 10019; (212) 977-2634.

Jerry Falwell announces, "Ronald Reagan will appoint four Supreme Court justices—and one of them is mine!"; Pat Robertson welcomes Oliver North to the *700 Club* in an overt fundraiser for the Contras. These unfortunate scenes from the eighties have precedents in the recent past and antecedents today. In the TV series **With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America, 1960-1992** (projected time 6 hrs, video) Calvin Skaggs "chronicles the large-scale entry of evangelical Christians into mainstream politcal activity." According to Skaggs the "culture wars" raging in the U.S. today, virtually ignored by the mainstream media, have been long brewing. The series, still in development, is targeted for completion by autumn 1996; the project has been met with interest by South Carolina ETV. *With God on Our Side*, Lumière Productions, Inc., 26 W. 17th St., 8th fl., NY, NY 10011; (212) 807-0796.

A sad young woman; an extraterrestrial-worship cult; apocalyptic messages from space; an alien named Sananda: so begins Chris Kraus' **Gravity & Grace** (75 min., 16mm). Sound like an East Village film? Well, that part comes later: the initial environs are no less than Auckland, New Zealand. When a student named Grace joins the cult to await deliverance in the form of a UFO that never arrives, her good friend Gravity leaves in disgust—for New York. There, as the years pass, Gravity becomes a failed East Village sculptor. One day a UFO appears... Scheduled for completion this month, Kraus' film "locates the millenium in a female world." *Gravity & Grace*, 151 Second Ave., #2A, NY, NY 10003; (212) 982-5603.

Diane Garey and Lawrence R. Hott have provided an "intimate, sometimes painful, often funny" documentary, **Tell Me Something I Can't Forget** (24 min., 16mm & all video formats), on the Chicopee Writers' Workshop in Amherst, MA. The workshop, an ongoing writing group for low-income women, has enabled its participants to "bring their lives to light in their own words." *Tell Me Something I Can't Forget*, c/o Direct Cinema, Ltd., Box 10003, Santa Monica, CA; (800) 525-0000.

What impact have corporate downsizing, the transformation into a service economy, and the growth of the temporary-help industry had on the working poor of this country? John Gwinn's **Are You Disposable?** (28 min., video) explores these issues using interviews with temporary laborers and skits performed by non-professionals, including homeless individuals. *Are You Disposable?*,

John Gwinn, Box 7003, Minneapolis, MN 55407; (612) 870-4771.

An enlightened response to the quest for easy solutions: There are none. That's the conclusion reached by Deborah Fort and Ann Skinner-Jones, producers of **The Great Divide** (60 min., video). The video documents the clash over 'right and wrong' in the heated debate over Oregon's antigay Ballot Measure 9 and Colorado's equally misguided Amendment 2. The issue of civil rights for gays and lesbians has divided communities, families, and friends; no one answer may repair the rift, contend Fort and Skinner-Jones, because "the situation by its very nature necessitates multiple answers." The Great Divide, DNA Productions, Box 22216, Santa Fe, NM 87502-2216; fax: (505) 473-6403.

Thérèse Svoboda has wondered what we would see if TV, like radio, picked up bits of images floating around in the video 'snow.' In **Rogue Transmissions** (1 min., 50 sec., VHS and 3/4"), a mother screens a tape of her dead child and finds out just that.

Plus, what do you do if spaghetti dribbles down your chin? Consult Svoboda's **Manners Mania** (10 min., VHS and 3/4"). "Not recommended for children over 30," this is a guide that covers the spectrum from spaghetti ettiquette to the handshake and foreign food rules. *Rogue Transmissions* and *Manners Mania*, Svoboda/Bull Productions, 56 Ludlow St., NY, NY 10002; (212) 477-3966; fax: 982-3235.

Yes, Rutger Hauer has a daughter, who is alive, well, and playing a junkie in Craig Schlattman's **At Ground Zero** (117 min., 16mm), which recently premiered at the Rotterdam International Film Festival. "A nihilistic, existential love story" financed guerilla-style (e.g. with limit-testing credit cards and 'borrowed' locations), the film details the cross-country odyssey of fringe dwellers Aysha Hauer and Tom Elliott. *At Ground Zero*, Proletariat Pictures, 1557 Berkely E, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (310) 453-0078; fax: 828-5063.

Final Cut (16 mm), by Rutgers University student Michael Manese, offers a lesson in nineties prudency for big-budget filmmakers. In total, this movie about movies cost about $2,000 to produce. The story centers on an idealistic film student who learns a great deal about himself and his art through the process of creating art. *Final Cut*, Michael Manese, 209 Hamilton St., New Brunswick, NJ 08901; (908) 247-7904.

A short autobiographical film by painter Basil Alkazzi, **New Seasons & Dreams** (21 min.; 16mm-to-video) offers a highly personal visual journey through the past decade. The text for the narration was culled from Alkazzi's journal, with added material written specifically for the film. In the last 10 years, the painter has had 15 one-person exhibitions of his work in Europe and the U.S. *Basil Alkazzi: Seasons & Dreams*, 200 E. 61st St., #28-G, NY, NY 10021; (212) 888-1038.

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Festivals

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THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER, DIRECTOR OF THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

DOMESTIC

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Sept. 22-25, CO. Noncompetitive fest for new ind. prods, now in 14th yr. Accepts features, shorts, doc, experimental, animated & educational films. Program made up of approx. 30 films, incl. premieres, retros & ind. work. Critics Choice Award selected by audience balloting. Entry fee: $25. (Entrants responsible for all shipping costs.) Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2"; preview on cassette. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Breckenridge Festival, Box 718, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (303) 453-6200.

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, fall, FL. 12th annual competitive fest showcases ind. work of filmmakers & media artists. Fest is held at Enzian Theater & Orlando Museum of Art. Cats incl. narrative, doc, animation, experimental. Cash awards in each cat. Entry fees: $15-25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2", Hi8; preview on 1/2". Contact: Jason Neff, Central Florida Film & Video Festival, 15 1/2 N. Eola Dr., #5, Orlando, FL 32801; (407) 839-6045.

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, July 29-31, IL. 3-day fest shows films & videos by ind. & underground filmmakers from around country. Several lectures & showings by guest filmmakers. Prizes awarded to best short, feature narrative & doc. Entry fee: $25 short, $35 feature. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, Hi8; preview on 1/2". Deadline: May 31. Contact: Jay Bliznick, Chicago Underground Film Festival, 2524 N. Lincoln Ave., ste. 190, Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 862-4182.

MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12-18, NY. Premiere US fest for anthropological & ethnographic non-fiction film & video, organized through museum's Education dept. 1994 themes incl. works on Shamanism, Transnationalism; emphasis on non-western cultures, but also incl. works on western communities & cultures. Selected film- & videomakers will receive certificate of participation & pass to all fest activities; some titles invited to participate in nat'l tour. Entry fee: $30 ind. film/video; $15 student; $75 TV/commercial film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette preferred. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Elaine Charnov, Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., NY, NY 10024-5192; (212) 769-5305; fax: 5329.

PXL THIS FOUR VIDEO FESTIVAL, fall, LA. Fest features videos shot w/ Fisher-Price toy video camera. Submissions must be shot w/ PXL 2000 camera & entered on VHS videotape at SP-2 hour speed. Entries not returned; do not send originals. All cats accepted. Oldest fest of kind in world. Deadline: Aug. 22. Contact: Gerry Fialka, PXL This, Clap Off They Glass Prods., 2427 1/2 Glyndon Ave., Venice, CA 90291; (310) 306-7330.

TERRA NOVA FILM FESTIVAL, May 19-22, IL. Sponsored by Terra Nova Films, Chicago-based prod. & distribution company, which specializes in films & videos on aging issues. Fest seeks "contemporary works that portray older adults in positive yet realistic manner." No entry fee. Deadline: Apr. 15. Contact: Rebekah M. Cowing, Terra Nova Films, Inc., 9848 S. Winchester Ave., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 881-8491.

UNIVERSITY FILM AND VIDEO ASSOCIATION STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, August, PA. Now in second yr., competitive fest accepts film & video in cats of animation, doc, experimental & narrative. At least $2,000 in prizes awarded. Nat'l tour of selected works. All entrants receive copy of UFVA Int'l Fest Directory for Students. Premiere fest screening will be held at annual UFVA conference, this yr in Bozeman, MT. Entry fee: $15, $10 for UFVA members. Deadline: May 31 (postmark). Contact: Dave Kluft, director, Dept. of R-T-F, Temple Univ., Philadelphia, PA; (800) 499-UFVA; fax: (215) 204-5280.

WILTON ARTS AND FILM FESTIVAL, May 13-14, NH. Sponsored by Wilton Business Association & Artists at Riverview Mill. Certificates presented to 3 entries selected by fest committee. Works judged on "innovation & ability to communicate." Entry fee: $10 plus postpaid return shipping. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2" Hi8, 8mm video. Contact: A&F Committee, PO Box 1184, Wilton, NH 03086-1184; (603) 654-9321.

FOREIGN

EUROPEAN MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, Sept. 7-11, Germany. Worldwide event for innovative experimental film & video art accompanied by video installations & interactive projects. Seminars, workshops & TV projects also part of program. Sections incl. New Film & Video Visions for recent German, European & int'l prod. in field of experimental film & video art & for related experimental features/docs, music video & computer animation. Specials & retros incl, presentaton of (re-)discoveries from film history & survey of individual countries or current social themes. Kunsthalle Dominikanerkirche (art gallery based in deconsecrated 17th C. church) acts as central venue. Playful approaches, experiments w/ technology & contemplative works are sought. For production of 1st edition of Multiple-Art-Sampler 1000 ADD ONE FRAME on CD-ROM, fest is looking for screened milni dramas in form of short videos, interactive art, telematics or hyper- & multimedia. New section: int'l student forum invites students & media ed. lecturers to pre-

sent works on basis of advertised competition. Deadline: May 15. Contact: European Media Art Festival, Postfach 1861, D-49008 Osnabruck, Germany; tel: 49 05 41 2 16 58; fax: 49 05 41 2 83 27; e-mail: emaf @ bionic.zer.de.

RIGA INTERNATIONAL FILM FORUM "ARSENALS," Sept. 19-26, Latvia. 5th int'l meeting place for "films of diverse expressions & filmmakers who are working in particular language of cinema." Fest features retro programs & survey on recent film from East & West in Panorama section. Open Screen called "The Arrival of Train" will feature experimental & avant-garde film. Feature, short, doc, animation & experimental works accepted, w/o genre restrictions. Entries must have been completed after Sept. 1992. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Augusts Sukuts, director, Int'l Film Forum "Arsenals," 14, Marstalu St., PO Box 626, Riga LV-1047, Latvia; tel: 00 371-2 229552/221620; fax: 00 371-2-227492/229403.

ST. PETERSBURG "MESSAGE TO MAN" INTERNATIONAL NON-FICTION FILM FESTIVAL, June 19-26, Russia. Now in 4th yr, fest has changed its dates to June (during Russia's white nights). Accepts short & feature-length docs under 100 min., animation under 60 min. & short fiction under 60 min. Program incl. main competition; out of competition & special section "Russia Through Friend's Eyes" (films about Russia from foreign filmmakers). Competition awards cash prizes from $1,000-$2,500. Films shown in theaters throughout St. Petersburg; fest will coincide w/ int'l "Festival of Festivals" feature fiction film fest, now in second yr. Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1992. Group shipment of preselected cassettes will be sent to Russia for final selection. Entry fee: $35 (makers of full-length features may be responsible for add'l shipping charges). Formats: 35mm, 16mm only; preview on 1/2". Deadline for submissions to US coord: Apr. 29. For info & appls, contact: Anne Borin, US coordinator, c/o Marie Nesthus, Donnell Media Center, 20 W. 53rd St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 362-3412; fax: 496-1090. Fest address: St. Petersburg Int'l "Message to Man" Festival, 12 Kaaravannaya St., 191011 St. Petersburg, Russia; tel: 011 78 12 235 2660; 230 2200; fax: 011 78 12 235 5318; 235 3995.

SAO PAULO INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, August, Brazil. Estab. in 1990, noncompetitive event celebrating 5th yr as major stop on int'l short film fest circuit. Organized by Museum of Image & Sound of São Paolo (MIS) & supported by State Dept. of Culture, fest exhibits short work of all genres. Fest organizes panoramas of Brazilian & Latin American prods, as well as special int'l programs. (Last yr. featured program of American ind. short films, which was sold out every evening.) Fest is well attended by local audiences & filmmakers from throughout Latin America; program also incl. panel discussions & daily newsletter. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: May 20. Contact: Zita Carvalhosa, fest dir., Int'l Short Film Festival of São Paolo, Museu Da Imagem e Do Som, Av. Europa 158, 01449 São Paolo, Brazil; tel: 011 55 11 280 0896; fax: 011 55 11 282 8074.

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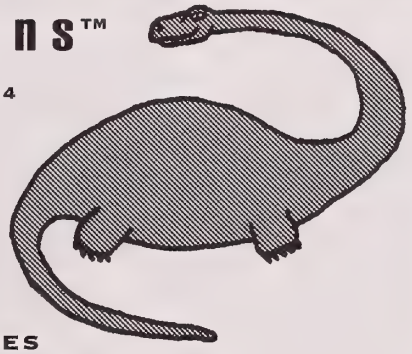
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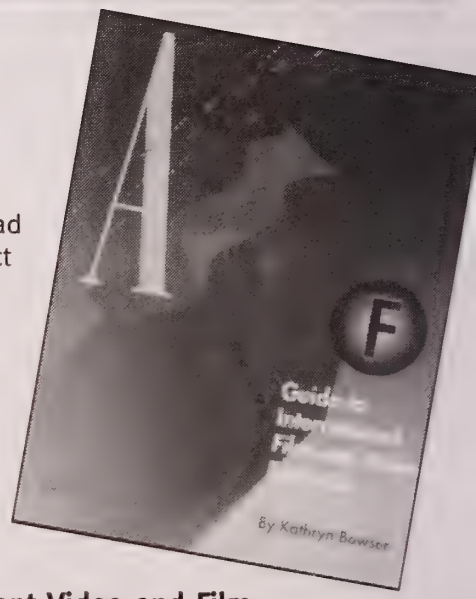
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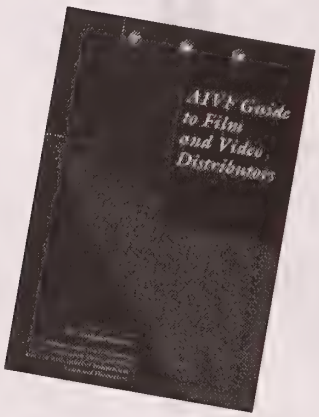
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Conferences • Seminars

BAY AREA VIDEO COALITION offers classes in advanced A/B roll & control track editing, Quicktime, Hi8 & edit aesthetics beginning in April. Contact: Anne Etheridge (425) 861-3282.

CENTER FOR NEW TV in Chicago offers workshops in all aspects of beginning & intermediate video prod., multimedia & telecomputing. Taught by professionals in the video arts. For more info, call: (312) 951-6868.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on; all taught by professionals in field. For info, contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (914) 552-8760.

GROUP CREATIVITY, nonprofit based in NY, is running one-day workshop about improv moviemaking. Beginning Sunday, April 10 for 10 weeks. Two work scholarships avail. Curriculum focuses on improv video movie format. Cost: $175. For info, call: David Lutzer (212) 727-2825.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

JEWISH MUSEUM in NYC sponsors symposium & screening series entitled "Red Channels: Blacklisting and the Media" through June 7. April 5 at 6:30 p.m., topic is "1950s Film" w/ speaker Jonathan Resenbaum of Chicago *Reader*; May 24 at 6:30 p.m., topic is "The Lenny Bruce Trials" w/ Jack Salzman, Director, Center for American Culture Studies, Columbia University. For more info on these and other symposia in program, call (212) 423-3234.

REPLITECH INTERNATIONAL, 3-day conference & expo for duplicators & replicators of video & audio tape, optical & floppy disks, will be held June 14-16 at Santa Clara Convention Center in Santa Clara, CA. For more info, call: Benita Roumanis, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc. (914) 328-9157.

SHOWBIZ EXPO WEST, June 11-13 at L.A. Convention Center, will host 225 exhibitors (including NBC Enterprises, Universal City Studio & Arriflex). Over 45 industry-driven panels will cover film, corporate video, technology & theater. To attend or exhibit, call Live Time, Inc. (213) 668-1811.

VIDEO EXPO/IMAGE WORLD, expo & seminar program for video prod., computer animation, graphics, multimedia presentation, digital imaging & prepress imaging professionals, will be held April 25-29 at the ExpoCenter in Chicago & Sept. 19-23 at Jacob Javits Convention Center in NYC. For more info, call: Janet Vargas, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc. (914) 328-9157.

VIDEOMAKER EXPO, focusing on tools & techniques of video prod., will run from April 21-23 at Meadowlands Convention Center, Secaucus, NJ. For info, contact: Chris Thomas (916) 891-8410.

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES is holding spring media workshops in basic video prod. & how to become DP. Through May. For more info, contact: Dorothy Thigpen (212) 925-0606.

Films • Tapes Wanted

21ST CENTURY, live interactive variety show on WMFP Boston, seeks videotapes of 5 min. or less that interact w/ show's text. For more info, contact: Richard Washbourne (415) 587-2296 or (415) 241-0664.

ALIVE TV is now accepting submissions of new films & videos. Experimental films, performance pieces, animation, narrative, shorts & essay works unique in content or style desired. Preference placed on work under 1/2 hr. Alive TV tries to be wake-up call to mainstream media (& PBS). Please watch program on local PBS station & only submit work that seems in sync w/ our goals. Help us survive as 1 of last non-mainstream programs on network TV. Send work on 1/2" or 3/4" w/ filmmaker's bio & film bio (awards, distributors, etc.) to: Neil Sieling, exec. producer, Alive TV, KTCA, 172 E. 4th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

ART IN GENERAL seeks works in all visual media for exhibitions/installations for1994-1995 season. Submit resumé, entry form & SASE. For more info, contact: Art in General, 79 Walker St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

BANANA CLUB, ind. prod. company specializing in networking w/ Japanese investors, producers, promoters, distributors, recording labels, TV networks & other media industries, seeks new materials in cinema, video, music & performing arts. Deadline: Ongoing. Send treatment, description, samples, press kit, standard release form & $20 filing fee to: Banana Club, 41 Union Sq. West, ste. 714, NY, NY 10003.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION, seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o Screen Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS accepts feature-length, shorts, animated, experimental, or docs of exceptional quality for Cinematheque program. Student works not accepted. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Ron Beattie, Center for Contemporary Arts, 291 E. Barcelona Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE, 1/2-hour, monthly news & public affairs program, shown on public-access stations across country, is looking for footage or produced pieces (1-30 min.) on Central America, Cuba & Haiti (especially Haiti, Salvadoran elections, return of Guatamalan refugees from Mexico). Also looking for someone in D.C. to tape interviews for show. Can't pay, but can cover costs of tape & mailing. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film &

video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COLLECTING COLLECTORS, video screening series that celebrates people w/ passion for collecting, seeks everything from unedited tapes to feature films. Send VHS tape w/ SASE & description to: Danny Leonard, media arts coordinator, Center for Creative Work, 425 Bush St., ste. 425, San Francisco, CA 94108; (510) 527-4814.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly NYC cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9355 or fax: 9337.

THE EDGE, Denver-based media collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres considered. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

THE E-TEAM, children's TV show w/ environmental theme, seeks film/video footage & completed works that maintain environmental, nature or science theme. Fees paid for footage used on air. Contact: David Calderwood, producer, Euro-Pacific Productions, Inc. (908) 530-4451.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FEEDBACK, anthology cable-access program of ind. work, is accepting work on 3/4", 1/2" or Hi8. Send tape & SASE to: N.A.M.E. Gallery, Attn. Video Commitee, 700 North Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), award-winning cable-access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred. No nudity.) Videos credited. Tapes returned. Mail to: Fem TV, Box 66604, Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, ste. 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10112.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

HOME GIRL PRODUCTIONS, consortium of women filmmakers, seeks home movies from lesbians for possible inclusion in feature-length film. Proceeds from film will go to creation of lesbian film fund. Send inquiries or movies to: Home Girl Productions, 662 North Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069.

IKON, America's first interactive fiber network, seeks videos. Network allows viewer to interact w/ video in multitude of ways. Programming incl. music videos, film clips & info pieces. High impact, experimental film, or computer animation, comedy, abstract/collage, PSAs & hybrid forms welcomed. Formats: 1/2", 3/4", S-VHS & Mac or PC diskettes; 30 sec. to 4 min. Include maker bio. Deadline: May 1. For info, contact: Sharon Asar, Sybarite Media, 5 Light St., ste. 407, Baltimore, MD 21202.

ITVS's INDEPENDENT TV '94, formerly Open Call, seeks innovative TV programs for audiences not currently served (youth, racial & ethnic minorities, new immigrants, etc.). Deadline: April 18. For guidelines, contact: ITVS, 190 E. Fifth St., ste. 200, St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 225-9035.

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screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4", or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for the Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. We are committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS, or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, invitational fest in 5th yr. at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding reference file of dedicated S-8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length in S-8, who have prints (not just originals). Fest has traveled to Brussels & may reach Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Paris, etc., in 1994. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 w/ file folder of support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, S-8 filmography, stills, photo of yourself (w/ name, address, phone) and description of films. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, guest curator, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

OPEN WIDE, weekly, half-hour TV series produced by CBC Manitoba that profiles best of alternative, underground & ind. cinema from Canada, US & world, seeks submissions. Looking for experimental, video art, comedy, drama, animation, docs & music videos between 30 sec. & 20 min. Submissions on 16mm, VHS, Hi-8, 3/4", 1/2" or video. Film/video associations & distribs. should send catalogs w/ submissions. License fee paid if selected for broadcast. Submissions may be in any language from any time. Will acknowledge submission w/in 10 days. Send to: Open Wide, CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2G1, Attn: Shipping Dept.; (204) 788-3111, Gavin Rich, producer.

ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in 8mm, S-8, & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, dir. of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater, & events from both the natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THIRD EYE MEDIA GROUP seeks interviews for series of videos on labor & arts. First tape focuses on issues w/in media-arts community. Individuals who have worked to develop unions, spearheaded personnel policy reforms, etc. are encouraged to respond. Resulting tape will be distributed free to media-arts organizations, serving as progressive organizing tool for workers to establish regulatory policies in areas of health benefits, contracts & other compensations. For more info or to send confidential responses, contact: Third Eye Media Group, c/o Labor & the Arts, 103 Greene Ave. #2, Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 789-0633 (ph./fax).

TV 2000, TV pilot, seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, seen by 9 million people on 42 broadcast & cablecast stations nationwide last yr., seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, animation, performance films/videos & media art under 28 min. for insightful series. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs preferred. For more info contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, manager of broadcast projects & acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA and NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, new ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

Opportunities • Gigs

IND. PRODUCERS interested in working for NYC agencies in freelance media prod. are invited to participate in new database directory to be distributed through Crosswalks TV & other sources. Will link inds. w/ government agencies creating media. $10 registration fee gets listing w/ 1 update per yr. For more info & appl., write: SCS Productions, 244 W. 54 St. #800, New York, NY 10019.

NORTH CAROLINA School of the Arts' new School of Filmmaking is recruiting faculty. Positions are one-year initial appointments. Filmmaker-in-Residence positions include: Screenwriting (2 posts), Directing, Postproduction, Visual Design & Critical Studies. Submit letters of appl. & resume to: Steven Montal, Assoc. Dean, NC School of the Arts, School of Filmmaking, 200 Waughtown St., PO Box 12189, Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2189; (910) 770-1330.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI, School of Communications, seeks tenure-track faculty member in television prod. to begin in August. Search will remain open until position is filled.

Successful candidate will have appropriate background to teach basic & advanced TV prod. classes & will have commitment to producing & helping students produce programs for school's cable channel. Ideally, candidate will also be qualified to teach courses in broadcast journalism. Ph.D. preferred. Rank & salary commensurate w/ qualifications. Letter of appl., current resumé & letters of recco should be mailed to: Dr. Lemuel B. Schofield, chair, search committee, PO Box 248127, School of Communication, Univ. of Miami, Coral Gables, FL 33124-2030. EOE & affirmative action employer encourages appls from minorities & women.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

PUBLICATIONS

ARCHITECTURE ON SCREEN, publication of the Program for Art on Film, the Metropolitan Museum of Art & the J. Paul Getty Trust, is selective guide to more than 900 films, videos & videodiscs in fields of architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation & city & regional planning. Book is available from G.K. Hall & Co. for $65. To order, call (800) 257-5755.

BAY AREA BACKLOT, new floppy-disk directory covering Northern California's motion picture, video, desktop video & multimedia industry has been released by *Film/TapeWorld*, Northern California's film & video news magazine. It will be avail. on floppy disk for easy access from Mac computers. For more info, call: *Film/TapeWorld* at (415) 543-6189.

CD-ROM ART/CULTURE MAGAZINE seeks contributors. Bicoastal, interactive multimedia pub. (accessible as computer interface) will incorporate video, text, sound & graphics. Seeking work from writers and artists in all media. Focus is on formal experimentation & mixed media compositions. Themes incl.: media critcism, cybernetics, found sound/imagery & information overload. Send submissions (film/videomakers should submit VHS format) to: GUSH metamedia, PO Box 3291, NY, NY 10185. For more info, contact: Adam (718) 858-9379 or Jack (415) 776-9400.

FREE CATALOG of ind. & experimental films on video! Call Alternative Filmworks, Inc. (800) 797-FILM.

GUIDE FOR NONTENURED FACULTY MEMBERS (monograph #6), publication of University Film & Video Association, is avail. by writing: Editor, Journal of Film & Video, Dept. of Communication, Georgia State Univ., University Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303-3080.

GUIDELINES TO INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION: Info on shooting overseas. Topics cover everything from pre- to postprod. Incl. chapters on int'l standards & formats, insurance, using foreign crew, int'l contacts & tips on how to keep out of jail. Written by David Calderwood, experienced int'l producer,

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Other back issues are also for sale.

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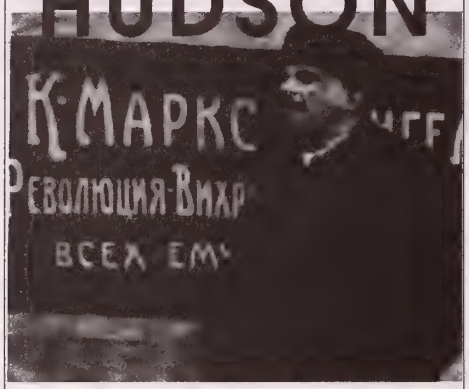
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MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for $14.95 + shipping & handling. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, Dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., Area M, NY, NY 10019.

NAMAC offers member directory w/ up-to-the-min. compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media-arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org. history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC ($25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members) to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, ste. 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artist's right as well as federal & state law. To request a copy, call People for the American Way (202)467-4999.

Resources • Funds

ALAMO AMERICAN FILM COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS, debuts this year. Students eligible for cash prizes of $1,000, $500 & $250 for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners in 5 cats: narrative, doc, experimental, music video, PSA. Format: 3/4". Deadline: April 30. Contact: Alamo Film Competition, 1700 N. Dixie Hwy. Ste. 100, Boca Raton, FL 33432; (407) 392-4988; fax: (407) 750-8175.

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris (612) 341-0755.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., PO Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St. NE, Ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY PROGRAM is accepting appls from artists interested in studying techniques of video image processing during an intensive 5-day residency. Artists must have prior experience in video prod. & must incl. resumé & project description indicating how image processing is integrated in their work. For more info, contact: Ralph Hocking (607) 687-4341.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free of charge to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications ($35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, executive director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access Program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP, nonprofit organization dedicated to discovery & development of new screenwriters, is accepting submissions for WW Special Event, monthly reading by WW Actors Repertory Company before a live audience, w/ prominent film/TV professionals serving as moderators to critique screenplay. Past moderators incl. Oliver Stone, Lawrence Kasdan & Ray Bradbury. For more info, send SASE to: Writers Workshop P.O. Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

Miscellaneous

COMMUNITY TV NETWORK seeks video equipment donations. CTVN is community-based nonprofit organization, which provides video training to inner-city youths in Chicago. For more info, call: Julie Brich (312) 278-8500.

EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY APPEAL: California State, Northridge, at the epicenter of the January quake, suffered severe damage. They are looking for film and video equipment, supplies, books, and money. All gifts are tax deductible. Send checks to: CSUN Foundation/RTVF Dept., and equipment, supplies, and books to: RTVF Dept., CSUN, Northridge, CA 931330; (818) 885-3192 or 3195.

MEMORANDA: Continued from p. 64

Telco Report has sent a promotional mailing to members with more information about the offer. To subscribe or to list your production, call (310) 828-4003.

MAILING LIST NOTES

We sell our membership mailing list to many organizations, both for earned income and as a way to let members know about businesses and services they may find useful. In light of the concerns raised about a recent mailing (see p. 8 of this issue), we will be making a greater effort to evaluate purchasers before releasing the list. However, we cannot endorse or make any representations about services offered that are not sponsored by AIVF. Members have the option to request that their name not be released in list sales; please let us know if that is your preference.

MINUTES OF THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Board of Directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York on January 16, 1994. In attendance were: Debra Zimmerman (chair), Robert Richter (president), James Klein (treasurer), Bart Weiss (secretary), Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Barbara Hammer, Beni Matias, Robb Moss, Eugene Aleinikoff (FIVF), and Ruby Lerner (ex officio). Absent were Wilder Knight, Joan Braderman, Loni Ding, James Schamus, and Dee Davis.

The board discussed options for action related to the premises vacated by Film News Now, including the possibility of a lawsuit. A letter will be sent to Christine Choy to initiate the process of recovering rent payments due.

Administrative/Festival Bureau director Kathryn Bowser announced that after more than seven years on staff at AIVF, she will become a consultant for the organization, focusing on publications and the festival bureau. With regard to publications, Bowser reported that the *Asia Production Guide* will be ready for publication by late spring. Additionally, we are planning updates and new editions of our current books, including the *Distributors Guide* and Morrie Warshawski's *The Next Step*.

Membership Programs director Pamela Calvert reported on membership initiatives; we are currently on-line on Mark Abbate's bulletin board within American OnLine, and members have been posting messages and queries. Weiss will be the board representative on-line, responding to members' issue-oriented comments and reporting back to the AIVF board.

Michele Shapiro, managing editor of *The Independent*, reported on the redesigned magazine, which has been praised by numerous members and colleagues. The editorial staff is now working on fixing design and printing problems to avoid black-outs of text such as appeared in the January/February issue. We also have plans to begin sending the magazine by 2nd Class mail, which is faster and cheaper than 3rd Class.

Advocacy coordinator Martha Wallner discussed the need for a "vision statement" to guide AIVF's efforts on behalf of various issues and causes; the board advocacy committee will present a draft for consideration at the next board meeting. The highest advocacy priority at this time is to build the organization's infrastructure for more systematic, comprehensive, and effective response. Lerner pointed out that the organization is particularly well-placed to act as a leader within the arts community on technology and telecommunications issues.

The board discussed AIVF's role in supporting the reauthorization and funding of ITVS. Kim-Gibson and Moss will draft a letter to ITVS director James Yee affirming support for ITVS and discussing ways to strengthen the relationship between AIVF and ITVS.

Zimmerman reported that the executive committee is reviewing the board committees, bylaws, and personnel policies, as well as the relationship between the AIVF and FIVF boards and the role of the advisory committee. Zimmerman will ask AIVF board member Wilder Knight to resign because of absence from meetings; his position on the board will be filled by 1st alternate/FIVF board member Dee Davis.

Matias reported that the structure task force is concentrating on the revision of election procedures and board job descriptions and will present recommendations for action at the next board meeting, at which point the task force will dismantle.

Board elections were held, resulting in approval of the following: Zimmerman, chair; Richter, president; Ding, vice president; Klein, treasurer; Weiss, secretary. The officers will serve until election of new officers at the September meeting of the board.

The next board of directors meeting will be held April 24.

BOARD NOMINATIONS/ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

The AIVF annual membership meeting will be held on Friday, April 22, at Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Avenue.

We are accepting advance nominations in writing for the board of directors at the AIVF office up until April 22. AIVF board members are elected to a three-year term. The board gathers four times per year in New York City for two-day meetings (AIVF pays travel costs for non-NYC residents). We have an active board; members must be prepared to set aside adequate time to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

- Attendance at all board meetings and participation in conference calls when necessary;
- Preparation for meetings by reading advance materials from staff;
- Active participation in one or more committees as determined by the organization's needs and as requested by the board chair or executive director.
- Fulfillment of commitments within agreed-upon deadlines;
- General support for the executive director and staff as needed.

Board nominations must be made and seconded by current AIVF members in good standing. You may nominate yourself. Board members must be over the age of 19. Nominations not seconded in advance may be seconded at the membership meeting.

To make a nomination, send or fax us the name, address, and telephone numbers of the (1) nominee, (2) nominator, and (3) member seconding the nomination. We cannot accept nominations over the phone.

Please note: we are sending AIVF members details on the annual meeting, with information on procedures for submitting work to the open screening program.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of The Independent, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearning house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations, and organizations:

The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, National Video Resources, and the Consolidated Edison Company of New York.

Thanks also go to the following individuals and businesses:

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BY PAMELA CALVERT

UPCOMING EVENTS

"MEET YOUR (FELLOW) MAKER" A MONTHLY MEMBER SALON

This is a monthly opportunity for members to meet informally. It's a brand-new program, organized by AIVF member Jonathan Berman (*The Shvitz*), and we're excited to see what direction it takes.

Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 Second Avenue (9th St.), NYC
When: The third Tuesday of each month; April 19, 6-8 pm. (Drinks are half-price for the first hour.) Make it a regular date: plan ahead for Tuesday, May 17!

MONTHLY MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices to learn about the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the resource library.

When: Wednesday, April 20, at 6 pm, at the AIVF offices. RSVP helpful but not essential (212) 473-3400.

MEET AND GREETS

These are opportunities for AIVF members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP essential.*

LYNN HOLST
Vice president, Creative Affairs
American Playhouse
Thursday, April 28, 6 pm

FORUMS

We are working with two film festivals taking place in NYC in late April/early May, to present panels focusing on issues of interest to independents:

Human Rights Watch Film Festival:
April 28-May 12
AIVF panel: POLITICAL FILMMAKING IN THE UNITED STATES

"Political" filmmaking has taken different forms in the U.S. than elsewhere in the world. A political subject is often seen as the kiss of death by the commercial industry, killing prospects for many projects. Money and distribution are no less problems abroad, but political filmmaking flourishes internationally. What makes it possible for foreign filmmakers to produce work that Americans largely cannot? And what new strategies and opportunities can we pursue? Filmmakers from the US and abroad will discuss these issues on a panel moderated by Hamilton Fish, director of the Human Rights Watch Film Festival and producer of *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie* and *The Memory of Justice.*

When: Wednesday, May 4, 6:30 pm
Where: tba; call AIVF offices for more information
Price: $2 with festival ticket stub; $5 others.

Festival sponsored by Human Rights Watch. For more information: (212) 473-3400 AIVF/(212) 972-8400 HRW

Wind and Glacier Voices Native American Film & Media Celebration: May 6-12
AIVF panel:
NATIVE AMERICAN FILM NOW

Hollywood, TV, and the festivals are all jumping on the bandwagon of native-oriented films. But has this opened any special opportunities for Native American filmmakers? Who holds the purse strings? And what are they looking for? What is the substance behind the new cachet? Filmmakers and industry reps will discuss current prospects and options in production, financing, distribution and exhibition.

When: Saturday, May 7, 3:30 pm
Where: Kaplan Penthouse (above Walter Reade Theater), Lincoln Center
Price: $2 with festival ticket stub; $5 others
Festival sponsored by American Indian Community House, Native American Law Alliance, Association on American Indian Affairs, Film Society of Lincoln Center, and Learning Alliance.

For more information: (212) 473-3400 AIVF/(212) 226-7171 Learning Alliance. Special thanks to AIVF member James McGowan for his assistance in organizing this event.

SAVE THAT DATE!

WORKING WITH COMPOSERS

Finding and commissioning a composer to create an original film score can be a challenging experience. AIVF and Meet the Composer are initiating a range of programs to facilitate the process, beginning with a panel discussion and "town meeting" Monday evening, May 23. Watch next month's *Independent* for details, or call the office for more information.

MARK LITWAK'S SELF-DEFENSE FOR WRITERS AND FILMMAKERS

In this intensive seminar, filmmakers learn how to anticipate problems in their negotiations with production and distribution companies and create incentives for companies to live up to their agreements. In the event of an unresolvable dispute, participants learn what remedies are available to enforce their rights. Mark Litwak is an entertainment attorney, teacher, and author of *Reel Power: The Struggle for Influence and Success in the New Hollywood* and the upcoming *Dealmaking in the Film and Television Industry.* Advance registration required.

When: Saturday, June 11, 10 am to 5:30 pm
Where: Location tba; call office for more info.
Price: $85 AIVF members; $95 others
For more information: (212) 473-3400

ON-LINE UPDATE

America Online has been deluged with new orders for service and has taken much longer than we anticipated to respond to our request for an AIVF discussion group [see Memoranda in January/February 1994]. At press time we still have no word, but fervently hope this will be old news by the time this issue is in your hands. We will announce our permanent keyword online in Abbate's bulletin board, where members have been having a spirited dialogue since January.

If you are new to AIVF or to America Online: once you are on-line, pull down **Go To** from the menu at the top of the screen and select **keyword.** At the prompt, type **abbate,** then **message center**, then **topics**, and finally **aivf.** To subscribe to America Online, call (800) 827-6364.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR AIVF MEMBERS

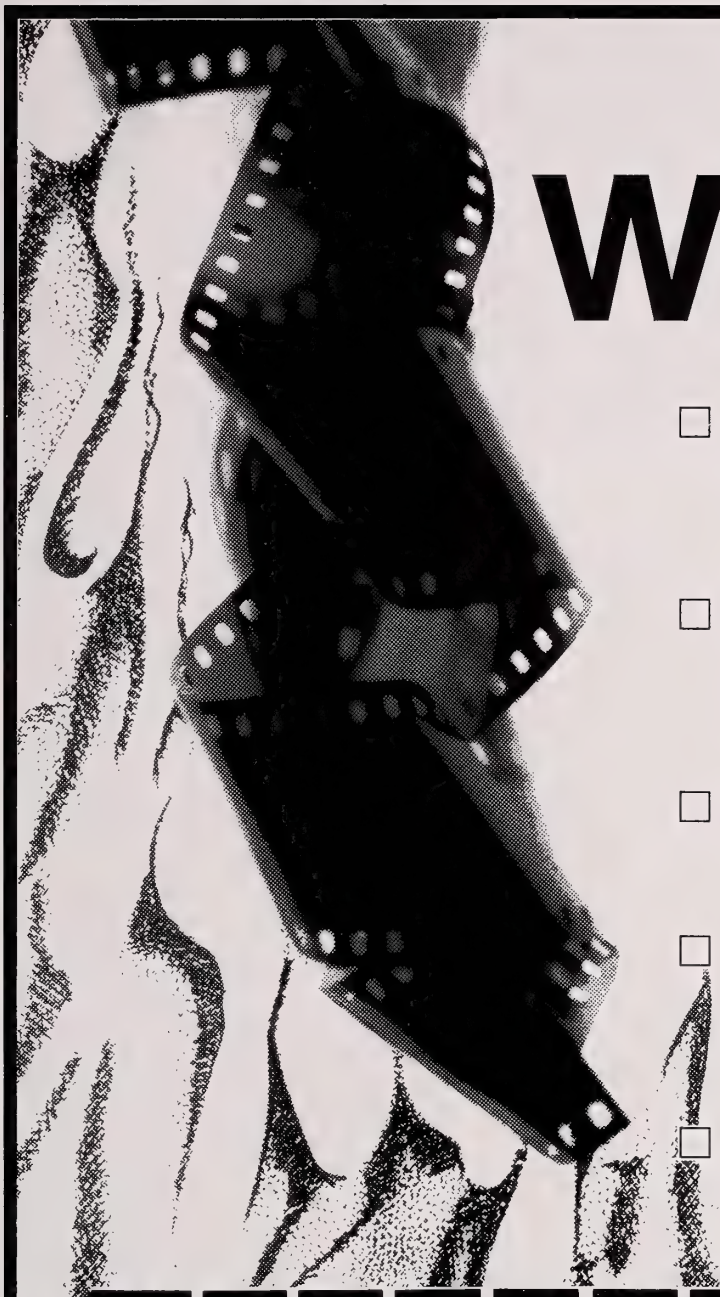
Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Los Angeles-based *Telco Report* is offering a special introductory one-year subscription to AIVF members at a deeply discounted price of $45 (reg. $200).

Distributed to thousands of subscribers in over 100 countries, the *Telco Report* is a weekly round-up of productions in the pipeline. Listings are free. The publication is useful to independents to see what else is on the market, who is distributing work similar to yours, and finding possible coproduction partners. Members who are festival and television programmers will find prospects every week for exhibition and broadcast.

Continued on p. 63.

Noho Office Space for Rent

Need office or editing space in a prime location? 2,000 sq. ft. available in a Broadway building (btwn Bleecker and Houston) that houses nonprofit film, publishing, and environmental groups, among others. Space is ideal for a share or production offices and can be subdivided. Rent is negotiable. Call John at (212) 473-3400.



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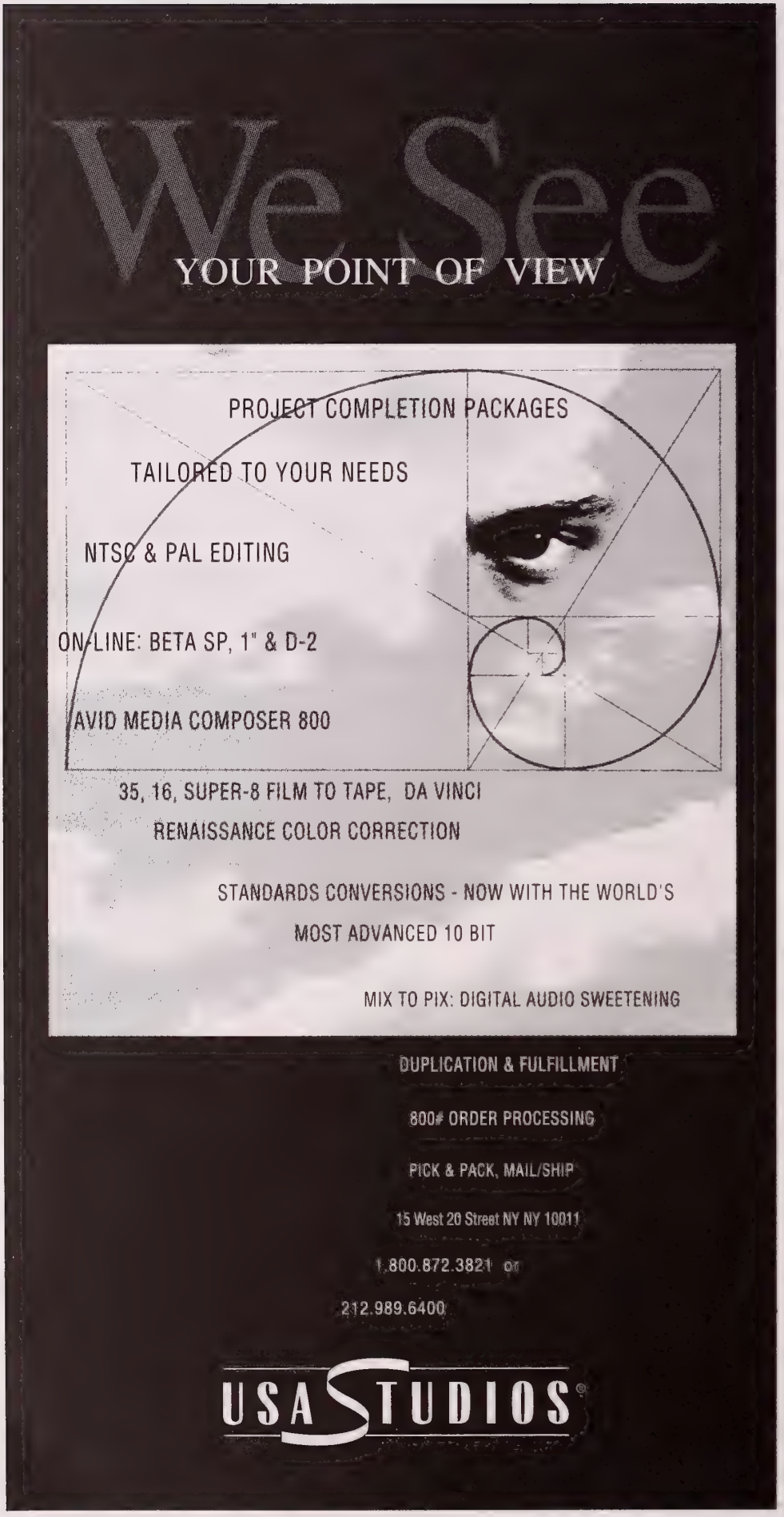
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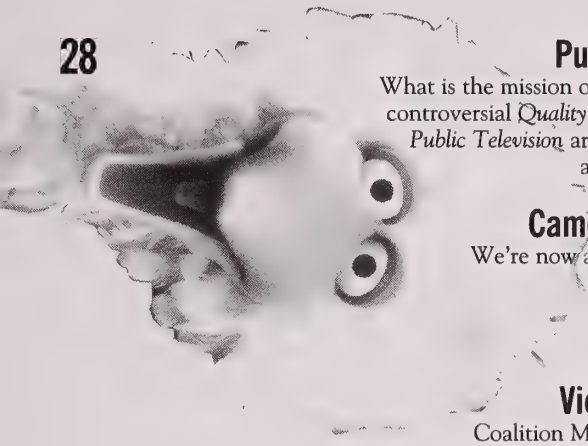
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Public Television at the Crossroads

What is the mission of public television in the 1990s and beyond? Excerpts from the controversial *Quality Time? The Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Public Television* are followed by comments from task force member Eli Evans and independent producer Ralph Arlyck.

Camcorders R Us By Laurie Ouellette

We're now a nation of camcorder owners. But has the camcorder democratized the media?



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MoMA Commemorates Stonewall by Kimberly Jean Smith

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Puttin' on the Glitz: NYC's Fifth Night Series by Robert Kolker

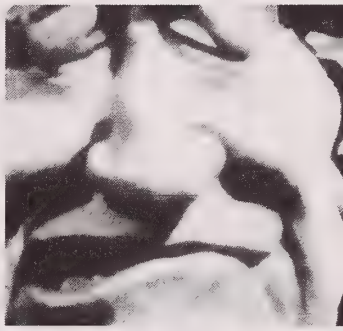
Neo-Nazi Doc Raises Ire in Germany by Julia Hammer

Latin American Fest Debates TV's Future by Jesikah Maria Ross

COVER: The proliferation of affordable camcorders has heralded a new era in communications. But where is all this camcorder footage appearing? Not on TV — unless it's silly family pranks or vigilante video. In "Camcorders R Us," Laurie Ouellette looks at the peculiar packaging of camcorder footage by broadcasters in the U.S.

Public TV is also evolving as the communications landscape shifts. "Public TV at the Crossroads" includes the key findings of a special task force on public TV, and assesses where independents fit in.

Cover photo: Gary Anderson



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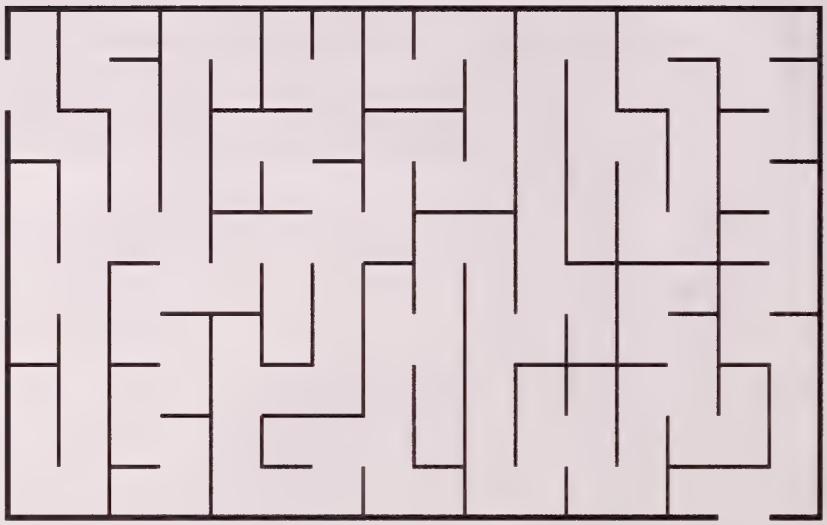
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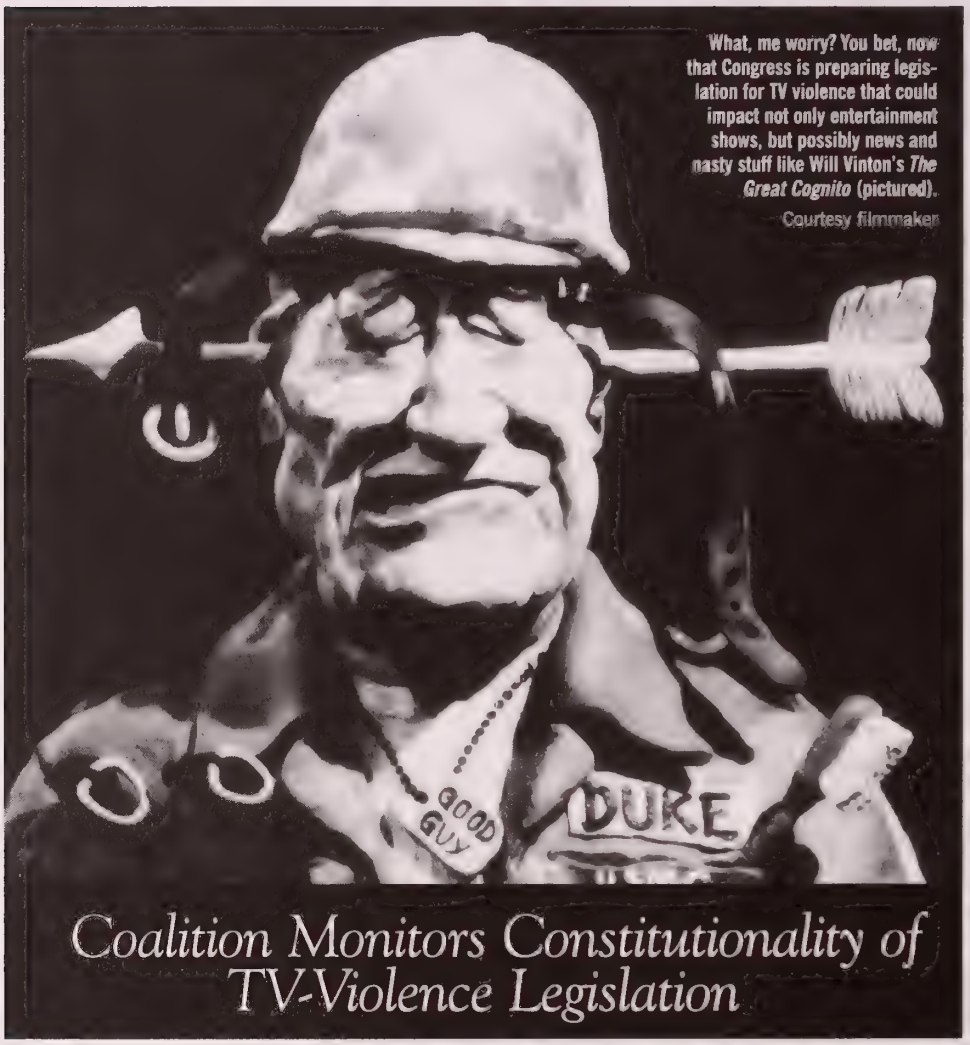
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VIOLENT NIGHTS



What, me worry? You bet, now that Congress is preparing legislation for TV violence that could impact not only entertainment shows, but possibly news and nasty stuff like Will Vinton's *The Great Cognito* (pictured).

Courtesy filmmaker

Coalition Monitors Constitutionality of TV-Violence Legislation

In an effort to curtail violence on television, lawmakers could be walking a fine line between protecting the country's young and violating First Amendment rights. The Free Expression Network, a national coalition comprising 44 organizations, including the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), People for the American Way, and the Alliance for Community Media, is watching carefully to make sure any legislation passed on the issue is constitutional.

The Senate Commerce Committee, chaired by Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D-South Carolina), held hearings last October on television violence, at which time Attorney General Janet Reno warned that if television networks did not voluntarily reduce violence on TV, the government would step in with restrictions. Since then, Senator Paul Simon (D-Illinois) reached an agreement with the cable and broadcast industries to create an industry monitoring mechanism, which will evaluate the level of violence in programming. The cable industry also indicated willingness to accept a rating system and some form of viewer discretion technology that would enable programs to be blocked out on individual TV sets. Although Simon has said publicly he feels legislation on TV violence is not necessary (as did 138 endorsers of an ad that ran in *The Washington Post* urging the TV industry to take voluntary steps to reign in TV violence before the government does it for them), numerous measures to regulate or monitor violence on television have been introduced in recent months. Among them are a V-chip bill by Congressman Ed Markey (D-Massachusetts), a Senate version of the same bill by Byron Dorgan (D-N. Dakota), and a third bill by Senator Hollings (D-South Carolina), which prohibits the airing of programs with violent content during times when children are likely to be watching.

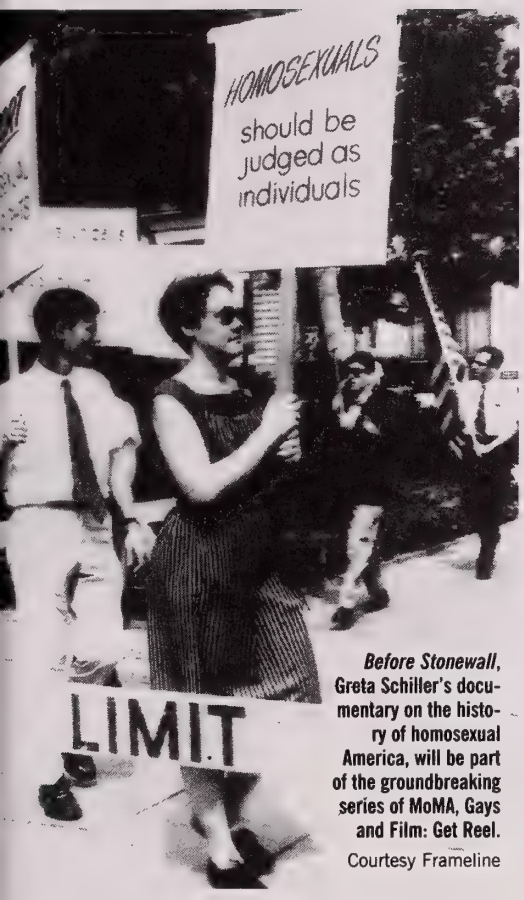
Congressman Markey, unlike Simon, believes legislation of some sort is unavoidable. Markey's proposed bill would require TV manufacturers to include a "V" chip in television sets that enables viewers to block specified programs, channels, and time slots, or block shows with a common rating (such as the "V" signal). Washington insiders say the bill is a leading contender because of Markey's clout as chair of the Telecommunications and Finance subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over television issues.

A spokesperson for the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression (NCFE), a Washington, DC-based organization that defends artists from censorship attacks, says the organization favors the Markey bill because it empowers parents to block reception on a show-by-show basis but does not necessarily call for the "V" rating. But as People for the American Way's legislative counsel Jim Halpert warns, "If even the mildest of the pending legislation makes it to the House or Senate floors, it will almost certainly face amendments that clearly violate the U.S. Constitution." If the government becomes involved in such decisions, he adds, no type of programming, including news programs and documentaries, would be immune. "Not even Monday night football would be sheltered constitutionally from censorship," Halpert says.

The Free Expression Network has called for hearings in both the House and Senate on the constitutionality of the various pieces of legislation that were in committee at press time. According to Bob Peck of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Senator Hollings has "expressed interest in holding hearings in the Senate," but no date had been scheduled at press time.

For more information on the Free Expression Network, contact Leslie Harris, public policy director at People for the American Way (202) 467-2390.

MICHELE SHAPIRO
with reporting by Martha Wallner



Before Stonewall, **Greta Schiller's documentary on the history of homosexual America, will be part of the groundbreaking series of MoMA, Gays and Film: Get Reel.**

Courtesy Frameline

GAY FILMS AT MOMA COMMEMORATE STONEWALL REBELLION

The Stonewall uprising, which took place 25 years ago in New York City, marks the birth of the modern gay and lesbian movement. Next month, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in Manhattan and the Rockefeller Foundation will recognize this anniversary with screenings of 45 films by, for, and about lesbians and gay men.

The "Gays and Film: Get Reel" series, scheduled from June 17 to July 12 at the museum, is part of a citywide celebration, which includes an international march for gay and lesbian rights at the United Nations and the Gay Games festival. "This [series] is a breakthrough for the [gay] community," says curator Alan Hertzberg. "It's the first time a major museum is focusing a [series] screening on gay content. [And] it's the first retrospective of the gay documentary genre."

The program features a range of independent films spanning more than three decades—from Andy Warhol's *Blow Job* to Pratibha Parmar's *Warrior Marks*. Some of the works focus on issues such as gay pride, AIDS, and sexuality while others celebrate the contribution of lesbian and gay filmmakers to the documentary genre. Featured filmmakers include Richard Fung, Marlon Riggs, Shirley Clarke, Barbara Hammer, Isaac Julien, Sadie Benning, Robbie Rosenberg, Greta Schiller, Elaine Velasquez, and Dawn Suggs.

Hertzberg first approached the museum with the idea for the series two years ago after someone at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center where he volunteers said it was too bad no mainstream museum was commemorating the Stonewall anniversary. "Museums are my business," says Hertzberg, an art and film consultant. "So I decided to carry the ball."

Capitalizing on his connections at MoMA, Hertzberg approached the museum with several concepts and eventually was named guest curator for the survey of nonfiction films. Hertzberg says the screenings offer an expanded vision of documentary because they also include narrative films, such as Frank Ripploh's *Taxi Zum Klo* and Cheryl Dunye's *The Potluck and the Passion.*

Larry Kardish, MoMA's curator and coordinator of film exhibitions, says the museum decided to focus on the documentary genre because "makers of non-fiction film have been more direct and forthright [toward lesbians and gay men] than fiction filmmakers within the structure of an industry still uncomfortable with homosexuality." But he is reluctant to call it a breakthrough for the lesbian and gay community. "What MoMA is doing is recognizing that 25 years ago something very important and historic happened and that documentaries...charted that change," Kardish says.

The Rockefeller Foundation became involved when Hertzberg approached them with a request for $15,000 that the project needed to move forward.

According to Janet Sternburg, senior program advisor in media at the foundation, Rockefeller funded the project because it was the first time a "flagship" museum like MoMA had mounted a major series with explicitly gay and lesbian themes. "That's what excited us—that linking," Sternberg says. "When one institution changes, it's suggestive that at least it's important [to other institutions] not to be afraid."

KIMBERLY JEAN SMITH

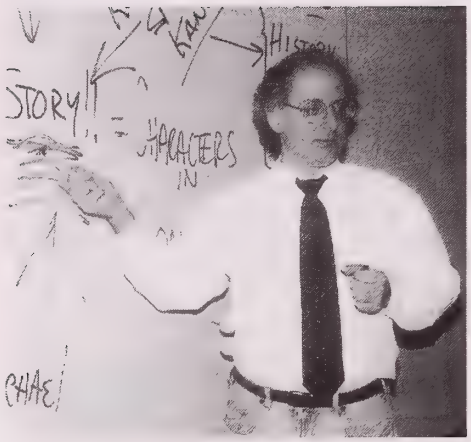
Kimberly Jean Smith is a New York-based freelance writer.

NEW NORTH CAROLINA FILM SCHOOL EMPHASIZES HANDS-ON TRAINING

"The film industry doesn't trust book learnin'," says the man in charge of the year-old filmmaking program at the North Carolina School of the Arts (NCSA) in Winston-Salem. "We're going to run the school as if it were a production company *and* as if it were a school, so when the [students] leave, the transition will be less traumatic."

Sam Grogg is talking, as any dean of a professional school should, about making sure





Sam Grogg, dean of the film school at NC School of the Arts, links production with 'book learnin.'

Photo: Chip Litaker, courtesy NC School of the Arts

his graduates make it in the real world. But Grogg, a well-established producer who traded in the world of endless sunshine and power lunches for the world of academic politicking last year, has something more ambitious in mind than simply making sure undergraduate portfolios show hands-on experience. He wants to make movies—real movies—with students.

Not at first, mind you; building the undergraduate program takes priority. These students—about 60 a year and almost all new to film—will focus on what Grogg calls the "key collaboration" of directing and screenwriting. (They'll also be taking general education and film history courses.) "We don't emphasize documentary or experimental or animated film up front," he notes, and adds that the training focuses on "story as the heart of all film. We've got video and 16mm film equipment, and the students will be able to adapt their training to any film situation."

They'll learn in what Grogg calls a "master-apprentice" relationship with faculty who've not only worked in film before, but continue to work as writers, directors, and producers. Unlike the other (and considerably more expensive) film programs around the country—including the one he used to teach in at UCLA—the goal at NCSA will be real cross-fertilization between film and the other professional departments.

A few years down the road, thanks to NCSA's foresight in winning permission to plan a Masters program, Grogg can begin to realize his dream of involving students in the day-to-day work of film production, while still offering the advanced students in the Masters program what he calls the "cocoon" of a properly structured and funded graduate program in which to do their feature thesis films.

To do that, Grogg is already visualizing the school as one giant production company. "We'll develop projects that the faculty and students can produce and direct. We'll be making features [that cost up to] $5 million, and episodic TV at about $150,000 a half-hour. They'll be competitive, professional, narrative pictures. We'll have the facilities in place. We'll just need some extra money."

If it were anybody but Grogg talking this way, skepticism would be very much in order. After all, as he himself acknowledges, announcements come in the film industry every day about new projects that never materialize. But Grogg is an old hand at raising money, and his list of credits is strongest in exactly the kind of independent film that some in Hollywood dismiss for its lack of wide box-office appeal: He helped come up with the money for *Choose Me* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, and produced *The Trip to Bountiful* (with Geraldine Page's Oscar-winning performance), the adaptation of the stage success *Da*, *Spike of Bensonhurst*, and *Patti Rocks*.

Money for the film school itself is less of a problem. NCSA provided start-up funds, and several foundations and the local chamber of commerce contributed. A National Endowment for the Arts challenge grant of $500,000 is being matched in part by another $500,000 gift from a local bank. And now that North Carolina's voters have passed a $6.9 million bond issue and the legislature has chipped in another $8 million, the school is looking down the road two years to what Grogg is calling a "state-of-the-art educational production, postproduction, and exhibition facility."

For application materials or more information, contact: The School of Filmmaking, North Carolina School of the Arts, 200 Waughtown St., Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2189; (910) 770-1330; 1339 (fax).

JEREMY BYMAN

Jeremy Byman teaches film at Gilford Technical Community College in Greensboro, NC, and writes film reviews for Triad Style Magazine, *a Greensboro-based weekly.*

PUTTIN' ON THE GLITZ: NYC'S FIFTH NIGHT SERIES

Thanks to the Fifth Night—a five-month-old series of screenplay readings and short film screenings held at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe in Manhattan—the route from a Lower East Side tenement to an earthquake-proof Malibu beach house has never seemed more direct. On any given Tuesday evening, the airy, 22-year-old East Village performance space for literati and performance poets becomes a feeding frenzy for William Morris agents and others in search of new talent. Worlds collide and, during the early-evening screenplay reading and the late-night screenings that follow, the counter-cultural cafe briefly becomes a *scene*.

Even one of New York's coldest and snowiest evenings witnesses no downturn in the Fifth Night's crowd, which divides itself between a few rows of seats facing the stage and scattered tables around the brick-walled room. "I walked in and I thought it looked like L.A.," says Mary Greening, a Nuyorican regular, who finally got a reservation after several previous attempts.

Announcer Roland Legiardi-Laura—documentarian, poet, and co-coordinator of the series with Amy Henry—offers blankets, hot chocolate, and sleeping bags to anyone who can't get a cab out of the neighborhood when the evening ends. He elicits laughter from the crowd when he says, "Between the night's scheduled screenplay reading and short film, we have a leisurely, half-hour networking break when you can exchange head shots and resumés."

Although many aspiring talents head to the Nuyorican for a taste of what is perhaps the only weekly venue for unproduced screenplays in the city, only a select few ever nab a seat, and everyone must pay a $7 admission charge at the door. "You have to be on the list to get in. It's not, like, just off the street," says Natalie Ross, a freelance producer of commercials, who is looking to get into features. Ross is there with friends of screenwriter Alan Madison, whose work will be read that evening, and his agent Jill Bock from the Tantleff Office. Bock calls the event "an incredible way to get a screenplay noticed and introduce new writers to the community." She should know: she's placed two scripts in the reading series so far.



Tamara Jenkins' *Fugitive Love* is among the shorts that have been screened at the popular Fifth Night scriptreading series.

Courtesy Boyfriend Productions, Inc.

The project's two directors and its advisory board choose and schedule scripts for the series based on merit and feasibility as an unstaged reading. They will accept finished, feature-length scripts from agents or individuals, but the required application materials offer a caveat: "Certain genres such as sci fi and action adventure may be unsuitable," the material reads, "because readings rely heavily on descriptive narrative."

Madison's screenplay, *Trouble on the Corner*, a dark comedy about a psychiatrist and his patients, had just one previous informal reading. Tonight the entire script is read by a cast of 12 professionals, including actress Tovah Feldshuh. The audience is silent throughout, but when the lights go up, the stage is rushed. Madison and his wife,



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Julie, a casting director, are beaming. Bock says Madison will most likely get a good writing assignment out of the exposure, and—who knows?—maybe *Trouble on the Corner* will one day get made.

The readings are cast some weeks by big industry names such as Ellen Lewis and Todd Thaler, both of whom sit on the Fifth Night's 11-member advisory board, along with Michael Peyser, Larry Meistrich, and others active in New York's film community. Name actors including Alan Arkin, Tony Goldwyn, and Polly Draper have participated in the readings. Sadly, the short films, which are screened after 10 p.m., are less of a draw; far fewer people stayed on for Tamara Jenkins' 13-minute film, *Fugitive Love*, a self-described "thinking woman's B-movie" made in 1991.

Says Amy Henry, although the screenings are an important part of the Fifth Night, the initial idea was to demystify the way development works in the film industry. She and Laura wanted to "give writers a way to see what works and what doesn't, and to give the film community a place to hang out." "The success," she admits, "has been sort of overwhelming, which I guess shows there was a need for this sort of thing."

Filmmakers interested in submitting works to Fifth Night should contact Henry or Laura at (212) 529-9329. To request an application for screenplay submission, write to: The Fifth Night, PO Box 20328, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009. To reserve a seat at Fifth Night (236 E. 3rd St.), call (212) 529-9329.

ROBERT KOLKER

Robert Kolker is a news and features reporter for The Westsider *in New York City.*

NEO-NAZI DOC RAISES IRE IN GERMANY

"Outside of Germany, people don't understand why Germans are so divided," says Heinz Badewitz, who, since 1977, has run the New German Film section of the Berlin International Film Festival. He is referring to the controversy that ensued recently over Winifred Bonengel's 1993 German documentary *Beruf: Neonazi* (*Profession: Neo-Nazi*), which was barred from screening at Berlin's European Film Market this year. The market runs concurrently with the Berlin festival in February, and, unlike the fest, is by and large open to anyone who pays the $330 feature-length screening fee. "The [market] turns down films, but they don't give political reasons," says Torsten Teichert, director of the Hamburg Filmburo, which provided DM 100,000 ($65,000)—a quarter of the film's total funding. As with many German films, *Beruf*'s budget was pieced together from a variety of government-subsidized regional film offices.

Bonengal's 83-minute documentary opens with a brief interview with Ernst Zundel, a fascist who fled to Canada in the 1950s and who now produces neo-Nazi propaganda. The remainder of the film focuses on a 29-year-old neo-Nazi and includes a visit to Auschwitz and a 15-minute, uncut malediction. "The danger," says Teichert, "is that the filmmaker did not make his stance clear with the cutting and



Writer/director Dan Levy (center) as Simon Rosenthal in *Without Me*, one of five films on right-wing violence in Germany commissioned by WDR.

Courtesy filmmaker

editing." Michael Nimmermann of Unidoc, *Beruf*'s international television distributor, attributes the uproar surrounding the film in Germany to the absence of a voiceover, which has become common practice. "Documentaries all have commentaries to explain the images. [The German audience] is used to this," he says.

Although the film was officially banned in Frankfurt, it has had limited screenings and aired on Germany's VOX, a private TV station. The televised broadcast, edited to 30 minutes, was followed by a 100-minute discussion.

Those who have protested against the documentary say it is too one-sided—completely neglecting the viewpoint of dissenters and victims. "The [pro-Nazi] arguments are very sophisticated. It occurs how people might get attracted to this guy," Teichert says. "Those 10 to 20 percent of Germans with tendencies toward right-wing fascist ideologies might be swayed."

The Berlinfilm festival's Badewitz discounted *Beruf* as offering anything really new. This year, however, his section of New German Films *did* include an anthology of five short films commissioned by WDR German television, all of which dealt with the same theme: the right-wing extremist violence that occurred during the autumn of 1992 in post-unified Germany. The five works, all under 20 minutes, approached the subject as both documentary and fiction. They included: Dani Levy's *Without Me*, Gerd Kroske's *Short Circuit*, Maris Pfeiffer's *A Small Town Suicide*, Philip Groning's *Victims and Witnesses*, and Uwe Janson's *Holy Cows*.

Without Me, a 20-minute fictional work shot in video and 16mm, is by director, writer, and actor Dani Levy, who achieved a modicum of recognition with the no-budget feature *I Was on Mars* in 1991. However, Levy's on- and off-screen partner, actress Maria Shrader, said *Without Me* has been the greatest boost to Levy's career. Levy, who is Jewish, moved to Germany from Switzerland as an adult. In *Without Me*, he plays Simon, a Jew living in present-day Germany whose paranoia about neo-fascists turns him into a virtual recluse. Simon's girlfriend scoffs at his overblown reactions. The scenes of Simon running scared from one destination to another, scored with music by Bobby McFerrin, are hauntingly powerful.

Shrouded beneath a fictional premise, *Without Me* has evoked far less controversy than *Beruf: Neonazi*. Still, Teichert believes *Beruf*'s in-your-face focus on a single neo-fascist leaves viewers with a lasting impression. "I've never seen material like this. You're so close to the bad guy..." he says. "It makes one realize the bad is inside."

JULIA HAMMER

Julia Hammer was a contributor to Moving Pictures Berlinale *during the 1994 Berlin Film Festival, and is national conference administrator for the Association of Independent Commercial Producers.*

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LATIN AMERICAN FEST DEBATES TV'S FUTURE

For the past 18 years, the town of Huelva on the southwest coast of Spain has hosted the annual Festival of Latin American Cinema. This past year, the film festival expanded its repertoire of film activities to include Encuentros de Television, meetings of European and Latin American regional television stations. The stated goals of the week-long meetings (held November 20 to 27, 1993) were twofold: to discuss common issues that local, independent television stations face, such as providing public service while remaining economically viable, and to establish an infrastructure for exchanging programs between buyers and makers from around the world. As festival director Diego Figueroa emphasized, "The prime aim of these meetings is the interchange of ideas and relations at all levels among European and Latin American television channels."

Attending the Encuentros could benefit U.S. independents, alternative programmers, and community media advocates in a number of ways. For independents, it provides a vehicle to screen work before an international audience of buyers, programmers, and makers. It is also a forum for exploring coproduction opportunities with Latin American and European television executives. For alternative TV programmers, it provides a chance to see what is being produced and circulated on the alternative television circuit and to find out how to purchase such work. For community media advocates, it is an opportunity to share stories and strategies with international colleagues dedicated to the concept of making television a vehicle for community communication in the public's interest.

Instead of aiming for the commercial heart like so many other international festivals, the Encuentros focused on coalition building: how independent producers can form associations to realize projects; how independent stations can stimulate more regional and international programming through coproduction. "The Encuentros is about commercializing," says Karen Ranucci of International Media Exchange in New York, who attended the Encuentros, "but not in the perverse sense... It's about trying to build bridges, to build alliances towards collective ends." According to Encuentros director Valentí Gómez i Oliver, "Our goal is to create a space where producers whose work traditionally has a hard time in the commercial world of the big markets can meet television executives and exchange ideas, barter, discuss future coproductions, and learn about what others are doing." Although networking was the primary objective, buying and selling took place throughout the week-long event.

Encuentros participants included regional

television executives, programming directors, independent producers, policy analysts, visual anthropologists, community media activists, and local television enthusiasts. Three representatives from the U.S. attended the premiere Encuentros, but there were at least six film- and videomakers from the States showing their work at the festival. Aside from the myriad of activities associated with the film festival, each day of the Encuentros was packed with presentations, screenings, and discussions.

Mornings featured keynote speakers delivering papers on specific aspects of independent regional television. Lecture topics included coproduction strategies, future telecommunications policies, and emerging technologies. After each presentation, the audience debated the content. Typically, the presentations lasted about 45 minutes while the ensuing discussions usually ran for well over an hour. Every afternoon, station executives, independent producers, and local television advocates were invited to schedule themselves for hour-long presentations. This allowed for greater participation and representation of independent producers and makers. It also exposed participants to a variety of organizations and provided a dynamic forum for exchanging ideas and strategies, and to view work from a wide range of locales.

Presentation topics ranged from regional television's relations with independent producers, to the public service functions played by local channels.

The festival provided booths equipped with monitors and playback decks for organizations, independents, and television channels to view work and exchange information. There were also informal roundtables which brought together visual anthropologists, independents, and community media advocates to highlight innovative uses of the television medium. One roundtable, for example, dealt with the issue of broad cultural participation, focusing on how community television can be a forum for anything from ethnographic self-representation to the creative expression of independent voices and visions of the local population.

Gómez i Oliver plans to publish the position papers, related articles, and organizational information collected during the Encuentros to distribute at the second annual Encuentros de Television, which will be held late this fall in Seville, Spain. Independents from the U.S. whose work has a focus or roots in Latin American or European issues and/or experience are encouraged to attend.

For more information contact: Carmen Acosta, General Secretary, *Encuentros TV*, c/o Granado 4, URB. El Almendral, 41927 Mairena del Aljarafe, Sevilla, Spain; tel: 011-34-5-418-0366; 011-34-5-453-1345 (fax).

JESIKAH MARIA ROSS

jesikah maria ross is production and human resources manager at Davis Community Television and an active member of the Alliance for Community Media.

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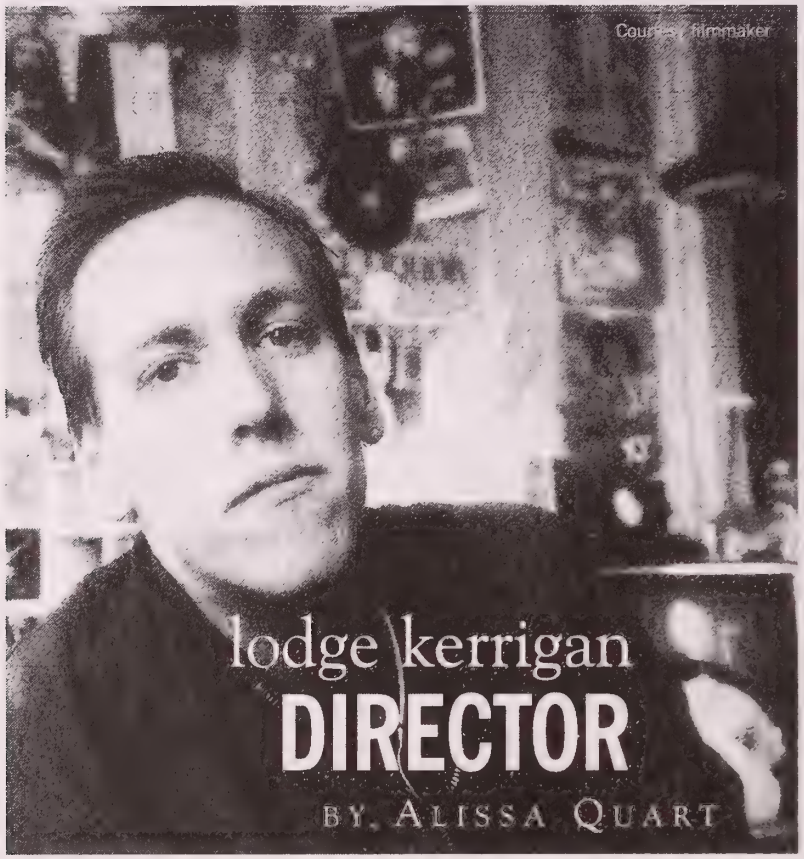
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Clean, Shaven

Lodge Kerrigan's 80-minute portrait of a schizophrenic's implosive journey home approximates the experience of someone who is clinically on the edge. Immediately one understands why the film has garnered excited praise at festivals from viewers and critics. Contrary to Hollywood's rulebook, *Clean, Shaven*'s first 10 minutes contain no dialogue, but instead thrust us into a hallucinatory subjectivity. Radio signals and disembodied voices hover over shots of wheatfields, electrical lines, and the protagonist crouched in an asylum cell.

"The subject matter I chose allowed for a nonlinear narrative," says Kerrigan about his first feature film, which he wrote, directed, and produced. The film's fractured and spare storyline follows Peter Winter (Peter Greene) after he leaves the asylum and travels home to Miscou Island, Canada, in search of his young daughter.

An offscreen murder occurs, and Peter is pegged as the obvious suspect. By the end, the murder remains somewhat unresolved, in an effort to confront the audience's notions of mental illness.

"Certain violence is permissible in society," explains the director. "The detective [in the film] is entitled by society to have and use a gun. But a person who is perceived as crazy is not acceptable," he continues. "It's easy for an audience to assume that Peter is violent, a murderer. I hope that comes into question by the end."

In researching schizophrenia, Kerrigan found that a common symptom of the disease is the sufferer's elaborate justifications of his delusions. In the film, Peter thinks a receiver has been implanted in his head and a transmitter under his fingernail. Kerrigan wanted to document such a person's deterioration and sense of rejection by society, working in opposition to the usual film representations of the mentally ill as cute props. "Peter's a man trying to hang onto himself, someone marginalized by society and immediately suspect, someone who is searching, while his mind is breaking down," says Kerrigan. Like *Taxi Driver* (a film he says greatly influenced him, along with the early works of Wim Wenders and Roman Polanski), *Clean, Shaven* seems to be about a specific psychological condition, and, more broadly, about the loneliness of perception. Kerrigan agrees that his feature is about loneliness. "In the narrative, I played on the absence of Peter's father," he says. "Many of the voices were accusatory male voices. That kind of absence is universal."

Audience response to *Clean, Shaven* has been intense, to the point where a few viewers have fainted during the scene in which Peter cuts out his fingernail while trying to reach the transmitter switch. Kerrigan is somewhat disappointed that this scene has been emphasized so much in reviews. "The violence is connected to Peter's illness; it's dramatically necessary. When he carves his nail out, there's a close-up of his unblinking face. That kind of blunting, that lack of response, is a symptom of schizophrenia. It just isn't clean Hollywood violence. I find it interesting that no one was disturbed by the shooting in the film."

Kerrigan, a graduate of New York University's film school, has worked as director of photography on music videos, documentaries, and other independent productions in order to pay the bills. With his short *Boy Meets Girl, So What?*, the last of five short films he made, Kerrigan began his working relationship with *Clean, Shaven*'s executive producer, J. Dixon Byrne.

Clean, Shaven was a shoestring production, shot on weekends when the money was available. As a result of this patchwork schedule, the film was in the works for three years—two in production and one in post. Kerrigan, an affable 29-year-old with a mordant sense of humor, developed a healthy attitude to the trials of this off-and-on effort. "Making *Clean, Shaven* changed the way I thought about film production," he says, "until I relished the idea of making a film day-to-day. I was happy to be a filmmaker for three years. The crew was exceptional and stabilizing. We were working against the clock, and it was very difficult to maintain visual continuity. It was really important to work with intelligent people, so you didn't have to explain everything."

Throughout this time, Byrne and the other core crew stuck with the project. So did the lead, Peter Greene, who since his strong performance in *Laws of Gravity* has become much in demand. Greene was cast before *Laws of Gravity* started rehearsals. "I spent six weeks auditioning for the role of Peter Winter, but I when I saw Peter Greene, I knew I wanted him for the role," the director recalls. "He intuitively understood the character's anxiety. He ended up being able to play the part consistently, even with all of the time-gaps in shooting." They were still filming after *Laws of Gravity* was released.

Kerrigan also had the help of friends and family. Principal photography began on Miscou Island, New Brunswick, in August 1990, where they shot for 19 days. Kerrigan's Canadian mother and many of his relatives live and work on the island as fishermen. "My family put the crew up and fed them fresh lobster. My cousin Nicole played Peter's daughter and many supporting parts were performed by family members."

The sound design, which was written into the original script, is a critical element in the film, conveying the psychological state of the main character far more than the dialogue.

Kerrigan relied on Tony Martinez and Michael Parsons to help create the final 52-track mix, which the director characterizes as "sound that works against the images." Jay Rabinowitz, who also edited *Night on Earth*, spent five weeks on the fine cut.

On the festival circuit, *Clean, Shaven* has been screened at Telluride, Sundance, New Directors/New Films, and the Chicago Film Festival, where it won a Silver Hugo for first feature. This month it goes to Cannes in the "Un Certain Regard" section.

A strong advocate of films that break with convention, Kerrigan shows little interest in moving to that high-concept Babylon on the West Coast. "Being an independent, I accept the way things are and work with the freedom and limitations of low-budget film. I wouldn't close my options, but I prefer the independent community, where people support each others' work and are really interested in what other people are doing. And I'm so influenced by my environment," he says, laughing, "that I think I'll stay in New York. If I go to L.A., I'll start wearing beige pants or something."

Kerrigan's next script plays on similar themes of absence and troubled father-daughter relationships. The dark plot centers around what Kerrigan calls "a hysterical pregnancy as a defense against incest." It will be produced by Good Machine Productions, which acted as sales agent for *Clean, Shaven*.

Asked what other kinds of films he'd like to make, Kerrigan responds, "A film without dialogue. Why isn't non-dialogue acceptable? The insistence on wall-to-wall dialogue in filmmaking is so steadfast, it might as well be a religion." With his own insistence on picturing those outside the social order and creating "new structures" for their stories, we can be assured Kerrigan is embarking on a singular and fascinating path.

Alissa Quart, a recent graduate of Brown University, lives in Manhattan and writes about film, poetry, and fiction.

ning dai
VIDEO DOCUMENTARIAN

BY MICHELE SHAPIRO


Photo: Hélène Caux

Discussions Caused by a Film's Filming Being Stopped

Those who caught the non-subtitled rough cut of Zhang Yuan's *Beijing Bastards* at last year's Rotterdam International Film Festival may have felt they were experiencing déjà vu when the film again appeared in the 1994 fest catalogue. What they actually experienced, however, was what many perceive as a blatant case of censorship on the part of China's government.

Beijing Bastards—a low-budget feature about Beijing's younger, counterculture generation by the man recognized as China's first filmmaker to work completely outside the studio system—was indeed shown at Rotterdam two years in a row.

Zhang's new feature, *Chicken Feathers on the Ground*, originally was scheduled to screen this year as part of an extensive program of new Chinese cinema, which included Tian Zhuangzhuang's *The Blue Kite*, Wang Xiaoshuai's *The Days*, and He Yi's *Self Portrait*. But just six days into production, government authorities forced the filmmaker to stop work on the project. Apparently Zhang had angered government officials by independently producing the film, thus bypassing the studio system, and by shipping copies of *Bastards* to screen at numerous international festivals (including Tokyo and Rotterdam) without the approval of China's Film Board.

Ning Dai, Zhang's wife and Wang Xiaoshuai's sister, was hired by one of the film's investors to record the *Chicken Feathers* shoot on videotape for promotional purposes. But when the filming came to a halt, Ning's funding was severed as well. She decided quickly, however, to continue recording the potentially dramatic aftermath at her own expense.

Ning, 35, gingerly sips tea from a plastic cup in the festival press lounge as she recalls the sequence of events. Her initial decision, she says, was not met with the approval of crew members. "They thought there was a chance to continue filming [*Chicken Feathers*], and that I might hurt that chance," she explains with the assistance of a translator. "Also, they were afraid something would happen to them if [authorities] saw the tape. But I realized what I was doing was exceptional," she adds, referring to her role as the first woman in Mainland China to independently produce a video documentary. The completed 100-minute project, *Discussions Caused by a Film's Filming Being Stopped*, also has the distinction of being the first such project to be screened at an international film festival.

Ning's video, inconsistent both in content and quality, has three sections: the first, which documents the *Chicken Feathers* shoot, lasts only a few minutes. Color and noise abound as crowds gather around Zhang and his crew to witness the shoot on the streets of Beijing. The second section, which could be called the Aftermath, has a less polished, more amateurish feel. The sound quality is often poor, yet there is an inherent excitement as the drama unfolds. During an interview with Zhang, the visibly dejected director instructs his wife to turn off her camera. Ning also captures a hotel-room meeting of crew and investors (the only one, she says, that she was allowed to videotape) during which they plot their strategy on whether to proceed with the filming. The doc's most poignant moment, and Ning's favorite, comes when Zhang, at home in their small apartment, sets fire to the *Chicken Feathers* script.

The third section of *Discussions* consists of interviews with Chinese documentarians, film professors, and actors, all of whom express similar concerns about the lack of free expression in their country. After a while, the independent thinkers begin to sound an awful lot alike.

Although the small-framed, strong-minded Ning graduated from the Beijing Film Academy in 1989 (seven years after Zhang Yimou, she points out), she had concentrated primarily on scriptwriting before *Discussions*. Both her father and mother are teachers at the music conservatory in Beijing, and Ning says she has always been interested in film. Prior to the Cultural Revolution, she watched Korean and Vietnemese pictures. At the film academy, she had her first taste of American films. Now she tends to view her favorites—Italian and French works, particularly those of Truffaut—again and again.

Despite her love of the film medium, Ning praises video because, unlike film, it is widely accessible and affordable. For her next video documentary project, Ning hopes to focus on women's status in China. "Our country has changed so much over the years, and I want to know what women think about the changes," she says.

Change has come slowly to the film industry in China, and prior to our meeting, a spokesperson from the Chinese Embassy had conveyed to festival director Emile Fallaux that the screening of unauthorized Chinese films, including Ning's, would have a "negative effect on the relationship between the

festival and the Chinese government." After consulting the numerous Chinese directors present in Rotterdam, Fallaux decided to continue the screenings. When asked if she fears returning home and whether she would consider living elsewhere to pursue her artistic freedom, Ning's seemingly genuine response would probably appease the authorities. "My roots are in China. Things there are improving slowly. Before films could only be made with studios. Now there are several independent films." She pauses and adds, "Things will get better."

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

this festival is full of principle. It showcases films and videos dealing with various human rights issues, such as freedom of speech, due process, and women's rights. The festival is a project of Human Rights Watch, an international organization based in New York that monitors human rights practices and violation of laws by governments.

"You're dealing with themes which are, by definition, not happy," says Fish. "Sometimes there's a resolution, which is positive, but the cumulative weight of this material is not fun." Lucky for Fish, the festival, currently in its fifth year, doesn't need escapist films, paparazzi, or stars in order to pack the theater. Whether showing fiction, animation, documentary, or shorts, the festival aims to provoke thought; its larger goal is to encourage more filmmakers to explore this

hamilton fish
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

BY B.J. SIGESMUND

The Human Rights Watch Film



Hamilton Fish, the progressive, reserved, and well-connected director of the Human Rights Watch Film Festival, has been many things over the 20 years since he finished college: publisher of *The Nation*; political candidate; film producer. So in 1989 when he tried growing his own organic vegetables in Livingston, New York, and selling them in the Union Square Greenmarket in Manhattan, it was just another venture. Yet when the enterprise failed, he finally saw a pattern. "It was too weighted on the side of principle and not on the side of marketing," he says, "a common problem in my work."

With the Human Rights Watch Film Festival, he may have solved that problem. Far from the marketing blitzes other worldwide festivals have become in recent years, terrain. "Our audience is coming here because they're getting something they can't get anywhere else," says Fish. A film's aesthetic value is important, he notes, but what's essential is that it have some political merit.

A colorful bead in Manhattan's cultural necklace, Fish, 42, had a long career before joining Human Rights Watch as a senior adviser in 1989. Although he revived and expanded the film festival in 1991, the filmic road of his career began 20 years ago.

After college, Fish coproduced *The Memory of Justice* (1976), one of the many political documentaries directed by his friend Marcel Ophuls. The film played at the Cannes and New York Film Festivals, and Ophuls—son of feature director Max Ophuls—went on to a career in film. Fish, the son and grandson of Republican Congressmen, took a different path.

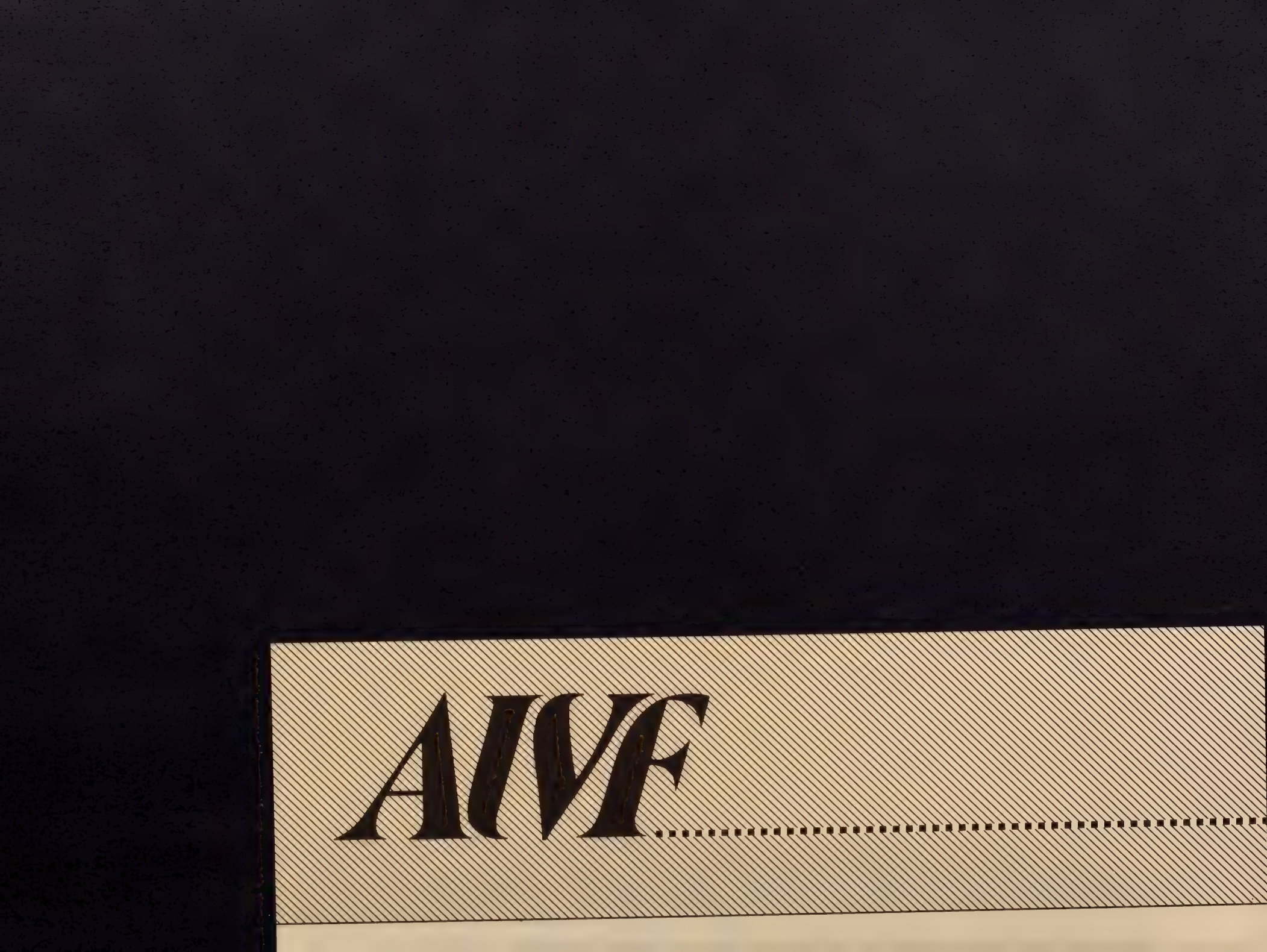
In 1977, he stepped into the publisher's chair at the left-leaning weekly *The Nation*, which caused "a great deal of distress" within his family. He put his film career on hiatus at that time, he says, because "I was inexperienced and entrepreneurial without being particularly knowledgeable about how to work those vineyards. This other opportunity seemed to play more to my strengths." Indeed. Over the 10 years he guided *The Nation*, circulation went from 17,000 to 100,000.

Fish joined Ophuls again in 1984 for a five-year project, producing *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie*, a documentary of the Gestapo chief. By the time

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the documentary won an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary in 1989, Fish had left *The Nation* and entered—then exited—politics. After many generations of conservatives (his grandfather reportedly hated President Roosevelt and campaigned against the New Deal), Fish ran as a Democrat for Westchester County's congressional seat. "It was never an act of rebelliousness to adopt a different political perspective, "he recalls. "These were entirely different times."

But Fish was defeated. "There's a certain price he pays for being from this family and having seen all of his family members have such success," says a former coworker. "He just feels it's coming to him." Nonetheless, Fish picked himself back up and found his way to Human Rights Watch and the festival.

For many filmmakers who are not as well-connected, the festival provides a high-profile venue. This year about 60 works will be screened at the Loews theater in the East Village over the two weeks from April 29 to May 12. The films then travel to Los Angeles' Nuart Theater (opening June 9) and to Washington D.C. in the fall. More sites will no doubt follow, if 1993 is any gauge. Last year the festival travelled to Los Angeles, Boston, East Hampton, Berkeley, Seattle, Olympia, Portland, Palm Springs, and abroad to Vienna, Venice, Hong Kong, and Sarajevo.

This year German filmmaker Margarethe von Trotta was selected for a retrospective sidebar, honored for her work with human rights. Von Trotta is the first woman to receive the award, which was given to Ophuls in 1992 and Argentine filmmaker Fernando E. Solanas in 1993. "I'm very pleased it was a woman, and that she agreed to do this," Fish says. "She has some old films from the seventies, and some recent ones, including *The Long Silence* (1991), which has been widely praised." Other works being screened are von Trotta's *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum* (1975), which she co-directed with her husband, Volker Schlondorff, *Marianne and Julianne* (1981), and *Rosa Luxemburg* (1986), which she wrote and directed.

Fish appreciates being on the ground floor of an important cultural enterprise, justly claiming, "It's established itself early in its life as a unique festival." It's anyone's guess how many more years the festival's dynamic director will remain. But no one will be surprised if Fish risks jumping out of his bowl again.

B. J. Sigesmund is an editorial assistant at Newsweek-Interactive.

AIVF is sponsoring a panel on Wednesday, May 4, on Political Filmmaking in the United States, moderated by Hamilton Fish, in conjunction with this year's Human Rights Watch Festival (April 28 - May 12). Location: Loews Villiage Theater (11th St. & 3rd Ave., NYC). Cost: $6.50 Call AIVF for details: (212) 473-3400.

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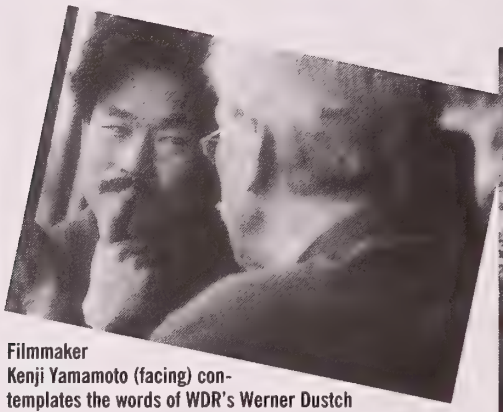
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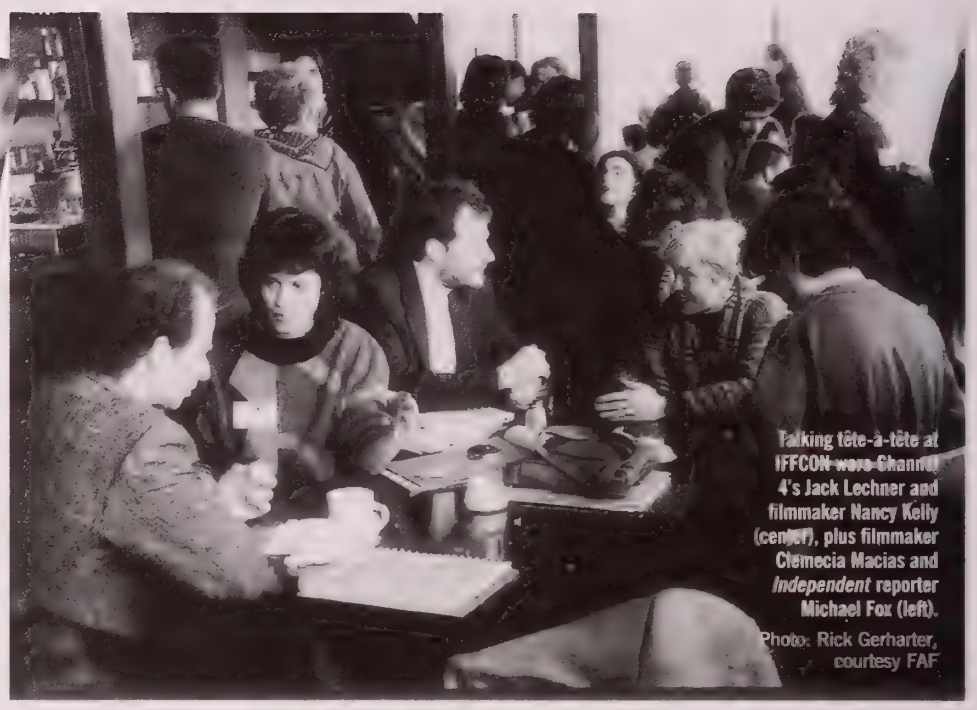
By Michael Fox

Perfect Pitch



Filmmaker Kenji Yamamoto (facing) contemplates the words of WDR's Werner Dustch at the IFFC.

Photo: Rick Gerharter, courtesy FAF



Talking tête-à-tête at IFFCON were Channel 4's Jack Lechner and filmmaker Nancy Kelly (center), plus filmmaker Clemecia Macias and *Independent* reporter Michael Fox (left).

Photo: Rick Gerharter, courtesy FAF

The International Film Financing Conference

When *American Playhouse*'s Sandra Schulberg began her keynote address to the first International Film Financing Conference (IFFCON) in San Francisco with the self-deprecating comment that she really didn't have much knowledge about foreign financing to impart, 59 pairs of shoulders slumped. Although the audience of independent producers chuckled when Schulberg drily added, "The only amusement I can offer is my hat," a palpable sense of concern about the quality and value of the upcoming weekend permeated the room.

After all, IFFCON represented an untested experiment to bring European public television executives to these shores to meet Bay Area independent producers. Although the two-day January seminar was sponsored by the redoubtable Film Arts Foundation and EBS Productions (a nonprofit organization that represents projects to international markets), the filmmakers were not entirely sure how high to set their expectations.

But all doubts were ultimately swept away in a tidal wave of information, ranging from the general philosophies of the six broadcasters to specifics such as contact names and fax numbers. For independent filmmakers used to the practiced apathy of PBS and local public broadcasting stations, the open-mindedness, support, and enthusiasm of the European panelists was nothing less than astonishing. The potentially farthest-reaching impact of IFFCON, however, won't be known for quite some time: Several projects generated substantial interest from the Europeans and may ultimately receive funding overseas.

From the earliest planning stages, EBS partner Wendy Braitman—who freely acknowledged the Rotterdam Film Festival's CineMart as a major source of inspiration—intended IFFCON to be a nuts-and-bolts, results-oriented conference. When she invited Werner Dutsch (WDR-Germany), Anne Even (ZDF/Arte-Germany), Nicolas Saada (La Sept/Arte-France), Jack Lechner (Channel 4-UK), Graham Massey (BBC-UK), and Schulberg (*American Playhouse*'s European-based senior vice president), Braitman made it clear to the panelists that they were in for an intensive weekend of pitching. The six were provided in advance with a dossier containing a two-page description of each participant's project, and they arrived with a list of producers they wanted to meet individually. Schulberg, for example, conferred with *Playhouse* cohort Lynn Holst and found four dramatic scripts she wanted to see; the BBC's Massey selected 10 projects about which he wanted more information. In turn, each filmmaker was allowed to select one panelist to meet with as part of the weekend structure.

"We made [the broadcasters] come shopping," Braitman asserts. She estimates that the dossier elicited initial interest in some 25 projects, of which about 20 were documentaries. Revealingly, the half-dozen proposals that Braitman believes have the best shot at European funding are docs that PBS would never consider, such as Michelle Handelman's *Women on the Edge* (about the political activities and sexual choices of women in the leather/SM community) and Elaine Trotter's *Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence* (a profile of San Francisco's theatrical drag activist/educators). Of course, the filmmakers have several more stages to navigate before a European station offers a deal. "It's a long way," Braitman conceded, "but it's a lot further than they would be without the seminar, because it's completely unlike sending something cold to someone."

Although conference attendees showed up prepared to do business, they also brought a well-honed sense of reality. "I didn't come with the expectation that someone would write a check," commented Los Angeles filmmaker Marco Williams (*In Search of Our Fathers*), who was one of 12 participants who journeyed from outside the Bay Area. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of independent producers—many of whom had prior experience with European funding—eagerly turned out for an up-to-the-minute scouting report on the continent's accessibility to Americans.

The panelists provided a blend of encour-

aging and discouraging news. Although European public television is arguably more open to American independents than PBS or domestic cable, Hollywood's dominance overseas has increased pressure on European broadcasters to nurture their homegrown talent. Consequently, it is becoming increasingly necessary for American filmmakers to line up a coproducer in each targeted country, a step that also eases the language and logistical headaches. The panelists also recommended that producers first raise a portion of the project's budget in the United States before venturing abroad.

At the same time, the European stations want to be involved as early as possible. They are far more interested in participating in the development process than in acquiring finished works, and consequently it behooves producers to make contact during preproduction (if not earlier).

Meanwhile, the filmmakers at IFFCON appreciated the reminder that the auteur theory is alive and well in Europe. "We're picky about scripts," Jack Lechner of Channel 4 said, "but the material doesn't mean anything to us unless we're excited about the filmmaker." The advantage of lining up a local coproducer notwithstanding, the execs agreed that a face-to-face meeting with a director to explore his or her vision is an essential element in their decision to back any project.

Along the same lines, the panelists unanimously expressed the jaw-dropping sentiment that public television has a responsibility to commission and broadcast works with a strong and unique point of view. Schulberg declared, "The work that's going to have a chance to be supported is the most quirky and the most distinctive," while La Sept/Arte's Saada said, "Some of the most interesting things I read or looked at [in San Francisco] were deeply rooted in an American tradition and didn't try to seduce a would-be European image." Their comments were aimed at dramatic films, but the BBC's Massey expressed a similar opinion with respect to documentaries: "We're less interested in observational 'fly on the wall' pieces than we used to be. We prefer a good story with a strong personality at the center."

As it happened, the only reservations voiced to me by seminar attendees in the course of the weekend came from documentary filmmakers who felt the panel was weighted too heavily toward narrative features. "A lot of questions I had people were unequipped to answer," Los Angeles documentarian Jay April said, "but they pointed me in the right direction."

San Francisco filmmaker Ashley James (*And Still We Dance*) likewise expressed frustration over what he termed a lack of emphasis on docs, but he was also surprised by the panelists' comments that film continues to dominate video as the medium of choice for Europeans. "The only question I have," he said, "is the reluctance the Europeans have about getting into video. We're in the forefront of that in the Bay Area; maybe we have something to teach the Europeans."

But the overwhelming attitude of participants was appreciation for the quality and commitment of the six panelists. "I heard very little about the bottom line here," James said. And New York filmmaker Jason Kliot (in preproduction on *Desperation Angels*, with Oliver Stone and Michael Stipe attached as executive producers) enthused, "They were so sickeningly generous. They killed themselves for us, and I really respected that."

Another visitor, filmmaker Beth B, who was in San Francisco for the opening of her multimedia installation, *Amnesia*, and shared her experiences of working with WDR on the feature film *Two Small Bodies*, was amazed at the broad institutional cooperation the conference received. KQED hosted the keynote speech and reception afterward, while the San Francisco International Film Festival threw a glittery party for the panelists, and the San Francisco Film and Video Arts Commission also lent its support.

Braitman's challenge for next year is expanding IFFCON's outreach to filmmakers around the country while adhering to FAF's mandate to serve its membership, the great majority of whom live in the Bay Area. One idea she's considering is an entire day of free events open to local filmmakers at all levels, perhaps conveying the kind of basic information that seminar attendees paid to hear this year. The closed-door sessions of IFFCON II, then, would allow an advanced level of discussion and even more face-to-face pitching. In any event, Braitman swears the size of the conference won't change. "I'm committed to keeping the intimacy of the event," she declares.

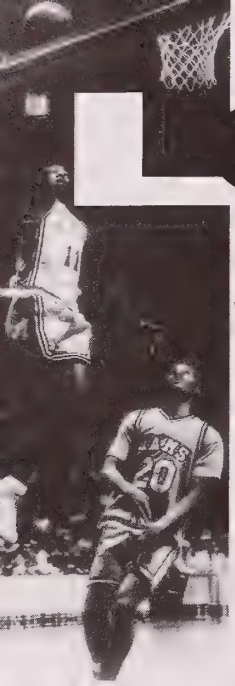
That closeness clearly contributed to the high-energy conversation at breaks and meals among filmmakers. Although I've never been able to satisfactorily locate and describe a Bay Area aesthetic (and the notion of grouping iconoclastic independent filmmakers under an umbrella is oxymoronic), the tone of the dialogues—which lacked any sense of competition or even networking in favor of sharing experiences, solutions, contacts, and information—conveyed as clear a sense of a filmmaking community as one could imagine. Indeed, several participants remarked that connecting with their equally isolated peers was one of the highlights of the weekend.

Braitman promises to maintain that certain Bay Area *joie de vivre* and casualness that prevailed at this first IFFCON. As the American-born Lechner of Channel 4 observed, "Because it's Bay Area filmmakers, they're all very nice. In New York, people complain. Here, people have a lot of reason to complain, but at least they can go to a wonderful restaurant afterward."

Michael Fox wrote about San Francisco's public television legacy in the March issue of The Independent, *and writes for* SF Weekly, Film/Tape World, *and other Bay Area publications.*

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Kartemquin Films brought Sundance audiences to their feet with their documentary *Hoop Dreams*. Over seven years in the making, the film follows two Chicago teens as they struggle to make the NBA. Courtesy Fine Line Features

LONG SHOTS SCORE BIG AT THE SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

The night Los Lobos played at Sundance, Z Place was packed to the legal limit long before the band arrived. Outside in the teeth-chattering cold, the city's fire marshals stood impassively on the steps, blocking a crowd of disoriented festival-goers who milled about with tickets in hand but little hope of entering the party anytime soon, despite the fact that it was part of their festival package. The next day, rumor had it that even Danny DeVito was turned away.

And so it goes at Sundance, where every year the crowds grow thicker and tickets sell out faster. This year was no exception, despite the welcome addition of a new screening facility—a huge high school auditorium—which added 20,000 tickets, a 30 percent increase over last year. Even so, all of the festival's 1,400 packages (which bundle tickets, panel discussions, reception passes, and other special event vouchers) were sold out by November for the late January event, according to festival director Geoffrey Gilmore. As a result, many films had waiting lines for their waiting lines, and some individual ticket buyers were left out in the cold again and again.

This led many critics to ponder Sundance's "struggle to survive success," as a *New York Times* headline put it, and wonder whether the festival is in danger of being overrun by Hollywood, what with all the distributors, agents, producers, publicists, actors, and hangers-on who have flocked to this small ski resort in increasing numbers ever since *sex, lies & videotape* made its breakthrough here in 1989. But as Sundance Institute president Robert Redford stalwartly told the *Times*, "I want to keep this festival belonging to the filmmakers, and make sure it doesn't get co-opted or overpowered by outside forces."

Still, at the final night's awards ceremony, Redford expressed some impatience with the "threatened by success" articles and all the gibes about the influx of fur coats, cellular phones, and Land Rovers. "We welcome them," he said, in essence. And so the festival should. Even though filmmakers "get slimed a lot," as one low-budget director put it, Hollywood's presence makes Sundance one of the best opportunities for independents seeking distribution.

There are, of course, those stories that make filmmakers shake their heads in despair. One friend recalls how two young Hollywood scouts groaned as the curtain opened, "Oh, God, the screen's masked. It must be 16mm!" And with that, they bolted up the aisle and into the night.

But the smart buyers stick around. Samuel Goldwyn made the first deal just two days into the festival, picking up *Go Fish*, a popular lesbian lark by first-time feature director Rose Troche. (Goldwyn has recently stepped up its acquisitions activities, and now includes former Sundance programmer Catherine Schulman as its new director of domestic acquisitions.) Miramax, known for its savvy in sniffing out good buys, scooped up Kevin Smith's $27,000 feature *Clerks*, one of the competition's most talked about films, as well as Tom Noonan's *What Happened Was*, the surprise winner of the Grand Jury Prize in the dramatic category. *Spanking the Monkey* director David Russell signed a distribution deal with Fine Line Features just minutes before the awards ceremony, where his film won the coveted Audience Award for best dramatic feature. Strand Releasing picked up Gregg Araki's *Totally F***ed Up*, included in the Premiere section, and IRS Releasing acquired rights to the Canadian feature *I Love a Man in Uniform*, by David Wellington.

The documentaries were also generating heat, with several picking up theatrical distribution deals and others heading towards TV dates on *P.O.V.* or Cinemax. But no Sundance soothsayers would have predicted the overwhelming response to *Hoop Dreams*, a three-hour documentary that chronicles the efforts of two inner-city teens to make it into the NBA. The word on this film was so genuinely enthusiastic that 150 people had to be turned away from the fourth screening, and buyers were swarming thick and fast.

Hoop Dreams is a nice case to remember when people accuse Sundance of somehow encouraging Hollywood-wannabe work. The Chicago-based filmmakers—director Steve James, producers Frederick Marx and Peter Gilbert, and executive producer Gordon Quinn—have a long track record in social issue documentaries [see Talking Heads, June 1993]. Quinn's production company, Kartemquin Films, has been around for almost 30 years and never considered Hollywood recognition a goal. So the success of *Hoop Dreams* at Sundance is a nice case of the dog wagging the tail—of quality independent work, not the buyers, driving the festival.

This surprise hit represents the best of dedicated independent documentary filmmaking. Who else but an independent team would spend seven-and-a-half years on a single project?—one researching and fundraising; two-and-a-half in postproduction; and four shooting, following the boys from age 14 to 18, as they move from being hot shots on urban playground courts to serious college recruitment material. The result is a richly textured film that's about so much more

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than basketball. Yes, it has the thrill of the game, with audiences cheering the courtside contests. They do so even as the film dissects the great ghetto myth and lays bare the economic pressures behind big league coaching and recruitment (which starts in *junior* high school). But the film's soul is off the court, located in the ups and downs of these boys' home lives. Parents are laid-off from their jobs, a father drifts into drug dealing, a family into welfare; tuition payments can't be met, so a son is expelled, then the school withholds his transcripts (blocking his ability to graduate from public school) until the family coughs up $1,800. There are triumphs, too, and surprise twists and turns in this real-life story that put audiences at the edge of their seats.

Last fall, the Kartemquin team sent rough-cuts to a number of smaller distributors, but this proved a vain effort. "Everyone responded almost identically, which was they liked the film very much, but they thought it was a very difficult problem in terms of distribution because of its length," recalls Marx.

Sundance turned everything around. "After the first showing—we weren't even in town yet—we started getting phone calls in Chicago," Marx recalls. "Some of them were cranks," he adds. "Literally, one was something like, 'Hi, my name is so-and-so. We just saw your film; I'm calling from the lobby. My husband and I would love to buy the film. Would $79.95 be alright?'" Marx laughs. "Up until that moment, you're thinking, 'Yeah, this is great!' Then your realize they just want a video cassette."

Bigger offers quickly followed, especially after *Hoop Dreams* won the Audience Award for best documentary. "There was a huge amount of interest coming from totally unexpected quarters," says Marx. "We never imagined that the Hollywood industry would suddenly be on us like flies on a sweater. It was really surprising and certainly flattering." Altogether, over two dozen companies were in touch. Ivan Reitman, Jodie Foster, Danny DeVito, and Madonna sent out feelers, as did Disney Productions, Warner Bros., Miramax, and Universal, among others. However, many were only interested in getting rights to fictionalize the story.

Never having been to Sundance before, let alone at the center of a feeding frenzy, the Kartemquin filmmakers were fortunate to be working with two producers reps, Chicagoans John Iltis and Dave Sikich, who helped them navigate the unfamiliar waters. "We come there. Nobody knows our faces. They give you a little badge with your name on it, and that's it," Quinn later told the *Chicago Filmletter*. "Whatever way in which the business takes place—and clearly Sikich and Iltis understand whatever that is—they seemed to have no trouble operating. But for people like us, had our film not been creating a whole lot of buzz, I don't know what we would have done." A month after the festival, the filmmakers closed a deal with Fine Line Features, which plans to release the film this September or October. A PBS date will follow, since PBS and CPB both put money into the project.

Among the other documentaries, the audience favorites were, interestingly, not straight-on political topics, but those dealing with ostensibly "soft," sometimes esoteric subjects. There was Steve M. Martin's widely praised *Theramin*, for instance, about the early electronic instrument played by waving one's hand through a magnetic field (remember the warbling sound in "Good Vibrations"?); *Colorado Cowboy*, Arthur Elgort's exquisitely photographed black-and-white paean to rodeo bronc rider Bruce Ford; and *Martha & Ethel*, about the nannies from Germany and the deep South who raised director Jyll Johnstone and producer Barbara Ettinger (sister of *The War Room* coproducer Wendy Ettinger). With child care such a concern nowadays, *Martha & Ethel* was a popular draw, providing an intimate look at the impact these two care-providers had on their respective families. In the process, it also casts light on the options open to women in the 1950s. Picked up for theatrical release by Sony Picture Classics, *Martha & Ethel* was met with praise and some relief during the Q&A from audiences worn down by this year's rash of dysfunctional family films.



Girl meets girl in *Go Fish*, a frolicsome lesbian feature from newcomer Rose Troche, which hooked the first distribution deal at Sundance.
Courtesy Samuel Goldwyn

Martha & Ethel was part of a strong batch of films by women. The top documentary prize (Grand Jury) went to Marilyn Mulford and Connie Field (*Rosie the Riveter*) for *Freedom on My Mind*, a solid, if stylistically traditional, documentary on the Civil Rights Movement's voter registration drive in Mississippi in the early sixties. In the documentary competition, 10 out of 17 entries were directed or codirected by women. Since women are more likely than men to represent women's concerns—whether it's in Congress or on the silver screen—this year the topics broadened to include child care, breast cancer (*Cancer in Two Voices*, by Lucy Massie Phenix), female circumcision (*Fire Eyes*, by Soraya Mire), politicized mothers in South Africa (*Mama Awethu!*, by Bethany Yarrow), female sexuality in the age of AIDS (*Heart of the Matter*, by Gini Reticker and Amber Hollibaugh), and mental illness and its connection to abuse (Allie Light's unforgettable *Dialogues with Madwomen*).

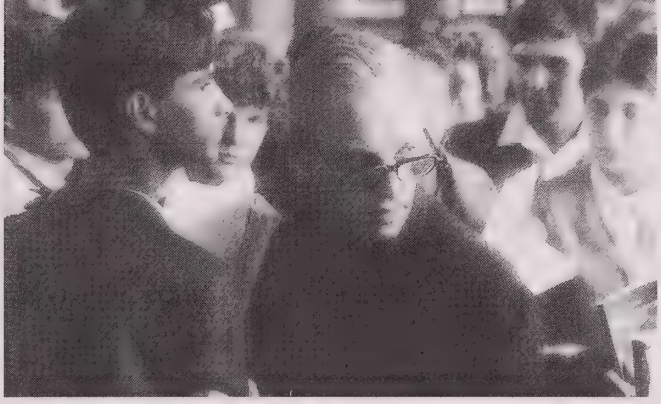
In contrast, only three of the 17 dramatic features in competition were by women,

reflecting the continuing difficulties women face when trying to develop feature projects. In addition to Troche's *Go Fish*, there were Deirdre Fishel's *Risk* and Kelly Reichardt's *River of Grass*. (A fourth film, Kayo Hatta's *Picture Bride*, was pulled from the festival.) Though snubbed at the awards ceremony, *Go Fish* snared a fair amount of time in the limelight, being both the festival's first distribution deal and the first lesbian dramatic feature from the Generation X crowd. While older lesbians grumbled about the PR hype plugging this as the first lesbian feature, Troche gamely admits her debt to earlier lesbian filmmakers, but is quick to point out the differences. In addition to *Go Fish*'s unabashed outness, "All the other movies were cast for mid-thirties and up," says Troche, "and the circumstances happen in a higher economic class. *Go Fish* is very much grunge, very much working class broads. They have jobs like waitressing, working at a bar, being perpetual students. That's something these other films weren't showing; everyone was nicely dressed, more upper class." Producer/cowriter Guinevere Turner adds, "*Go Fish* is completely about community. There's not another lesbian film that represents community in this way."

Tapping into this community is the name of the game for marketing a film like *Go Fish*. During the festival, Troche was negotiating with Goldwyn about hiring a lesbian marketing consultant and was delighted that the distributor was not interested in soft-pedaling the lesbian content, in the *Philadelphia* marketing mode. "What would we say it's about?" Troche queries. "Fish?" As part of their deal, the filmmakers get to work on the film's poster and trailer. *Go Fish* is scheduled to open this June, during Gay Pride Month.

IF SUNDANCE WERE ONLY ABOUT THE BUSINESS of filmmaking, it would be a much grimmer affair. While there's no question that the conversations and anxieties during the festival center around the commercial prospects for the competition films, Gilmore and company nonetheless make sure the festival is loaded with interesting sidebars. There are some U.S. filmmakers who grumble about foreign films taking away precious slots (Sundance shows only 90 features and 70 shorts altogether—making it about one-fifth the size of the Toronto Film Festival), but such complaints merely show that parochialism is as alive within the independent community as it is within the film industry.

Remember, it was Sundance where the buzz started around the charming magical-realist feature from Mexico, *Like Water for Chocolate*. Had Sundance not scheduled it, who knows whether the film would have gone anywhere in the States. This year, some of the festival's best films were again outside of the main competition. (Competition films must have over 50 percent U.S. financing, be feature-length, not studio-financed, and completed within the last year.) There was *Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould*, by French Canadian Francois Girard, a brilliantly conceived and endlessly inventive work about the eccentric and legendary pianist Glenn Gould [see Talking Heads, April 1994]. Another musical film, the buoyant *Backbeat*, had its world premiere here. This dramatic feature, by British filmmaker Iain Softley, recounts the birth of the Beatles, focusing on their breakthrough gigs in Hamburg and the "fifth Beatle's" love affair with German photographer Astrid Kirchherr. An additional, last-minute screening played to a packed and enthusiastic house, despite the late notice.



Some of the festival's finest films were found outside the main competition, such as *Betrayal*, a morally complex political drama by Romanian Radu Mihaileanu.
Photo: Johan Leysen, courtesy filmmaker

Then there was *Betrayal*, an impressive feature debut by Jewish-Romanian expatriate Radu Mihaileanu, about a dissident writer who becomes an informer for the Romanian secret police. (While people often seem to cut first-time filmmakers some slack, *Betrayal* demonstrates that it's possible for a director to have technical mastery and intellectual depth at one's command during a first outing.) Mihaileanu doesn't like to be called a political filmmaker ("As long as we call them political films, we are in a ghetto"). Nonetheless, while American independents seem preoccupied with dating rituals and domestic dysfunction, Mihaileanu belongs to that class of European filmmakers who open their lenses wider, surveying how "outside" forces like war, politics, and economics bear down on the human psyche. Think of Volker Schlondorff's *Circle of Deceit* or *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*, for instance, or Louis Malle's psychological probes into WWII collaborationists, *Au Revoir les Enfants* and *Lacombe, Lucien*. Although Mihaileanu names Orson Welles, Charlie Chaplin, Ingmar Bergman, and Tex Avery as his greatest influences, he agrees that his work fits in well with this other family, in which he also includes Ken Loach, Krzysztof Kieslowski, and Andrei Tarkovsky.

Like these directors, Mihaileanu follows the actions of people as they are boxed into impossible circumstances. Imprisoned and tortured for 11 years for writing an article critical of Stalin, the poet George Vlaicu finally has to choose between becoming an informer or facing execution. He agrees to inform once a week on two conditions: He will reveal no information about his friends that the Securitate doesn't already know. And his poems will be published uncensored. This second request is either Faustian or heroic—depending on whether one chooses to focus on the writer's ego or the rebellious message of his poetry. (Mihaileanu, who also writes poetry, says, "In Romania, we had so few things that a poem was a gift for us—and Vlaicu knows that.") The director moves through the exposition quickly, spending the bulk of the film on the poet's duplicitous existence and the greater betrayals that go on all around him.

Like many Romanians, Mihaileanu, at age 35, has first-hand knowledge of such encounters. His father, a journalist, was "asked" many times to be an informer, but successfully refused. *Betrayal* is based in part on his father's life, collected in 10 taped interviews ("I hoped his memory would become mine, and I will give it to somebody else.") and that of his father's friends, some of whom never came back from prison. Mihaileanu left the country at his father's urging at age 22 and moved to Israel, then Paris, where he enrolled in film school.

At Sundance, Mihaileanu told me, "I don't consider myself a filmmaker; I just have something to say." He continued, "If I didn't do the cinema, I would find some way to say it—writing, singing, theater. I would find a way."

How refreshing—and how unlike the multitudes of directors who prioritize career over content. Sadly, even though *Betrayal* netted three top prizes at Montreal's Festival des Films du Monde, subtitled films like it encounter stiff resistance in the U.S. *Betrayal*'s good word-of-mouth at Sundance resulted in an extra screening one morning at 7:45, which representatives from Fine Line, October, and Sony Classics rose early to attend (Mihaileanu handed out free doughnuts). But by the end of the festival, he still had no offers. Some say distributors were scared by *Betrayal*'s lukewarm box office in France, where it had the misfortune of opening the same day as 13 other films, with reviews appearing two months later. (Mihaileanu notes that in Holland, it had the second largest box office among art films.) Whatever the distributors' reasons, it's clearly our loss if *Betrayal* slips quietly from view.

Has Sundance been co-opted? No, not as long as it continues to show films like *Betrayal* and *Hoop Dreams*—and *Dialogues with Madwomen*, *32 Short Films about Glenn Gould*, and *Clean, Shaven*, and all the other independent visions that have nothing to do with by-the-book moviemaking, by filmmakers who have something to say.

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.

BY MICHELE SHAPIRO



Delftshaven, Rotterdam's one picturesque area that managed to survive WWII bombing attacks.
Photo: Michele Shapiro

Not Just Another McFest

THE ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Rotterdam is one of Europe's least quaint cities. Unlike Amsterdam, with its abundance of canal-front brownstones, museums, and coffee shops, Rotterdam is rarely included on the travel itineraries of the culture- and party-hungry backpacking set.

During World War II bombing raids, the once-picturesque Dutch port was leveled, and has since been rebuilt as a tangle of cinderblock shops, office buildings, and every imaginable fast food restaurant. The flame-broiled, Kentucky-fried McCity seems a most unlikely venue for an intimate festival that marries avant garde filmmaking and political activism. Then again, with seven movie theaters clustered around the festival's flagship hotel (the Hilton), the downtown location seems ready-made for such an event. This may help to explain why for the last 23 years, the Rotterdam International Film Festival—sandwiched between Sundance in late January and Berlin in mid-February—has continued to attract a vibrant crowd of film and video artists, international journalists, and spectators in search of something a little...different.

Bizarre may be a more appropriate word to describe this writer's first experience in Rotterdam, where mid- to upper-budget independent films such as *Romeo Is Bleeding*, *Short Cuts*, and *Like Water for Chocolate* screened alongside $10,000 features and 16mm shorts by undergrad film students. Where a panel discussion on West Coast independents quickly lapsed into one drug-induced maker's version of The World According to Caveh. Where the festival's most popular haunt was a bar-on-wheels which, parked in front of the Hilton, seats 10 and looks more like a Good Humor truck than a drinking establishment. Where old masters such as Bernardo Bertolucci held court with the new guard over coffee in the hotel lobby. Come to think of it, maybe surreal is an even better word to describe the experience.

Warning: Neither Rotterdam's unpredictable environment nor its rough-edged, quirky mix of nearly 400 features, docs, and shorts appeal to everyone. But while other European festivals have watched attendance dwindle in recent years due to the immense amount of competition, Rotterdam—and its maker-friendly market, the CineMart (see sidebar on pg. 27)—attract a larger crowd each year.

In 1994, the festival registered 155,000 paying visitors, a 41 percent leap over last year. In addition, 750 foreign guests attended, including 300 journalists from 65 countries and 150 directors. Emile Fallaux, who replaced Marco Müller as festival director in 1992, has witnessed a steady increase in attendance. He attributes the rise to a new generation of filmgoers. "The audience Rotterdam has gained is mostly young people. They are looking for something new, adventurous, and of quality," he says. "Maybe for them film has become the rock-and-roll of the nineties." Many of the festival's entries, as in years past, were produced by and targeted at the under-30 generation.

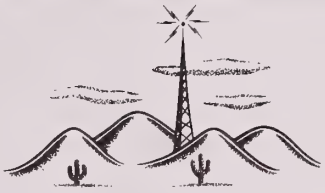
Fallaux, a documentarian and Dutch

journalist, has always respected American cinema, and this year, as in years past, films and videos from the U.S. figured prominently at Rotterdam. The festival had only a handful of world premiere features (many more films were either international premieres or familiar works from last year's festival circuit), and two hailed from the U.S. Both Craig Schlattman's *At Ground Zero* and Ray Lein's *Bad Apples* were filled with drugs, guns, and other ugly Americanisms. Much of the audience at a screening of Schlattman's film, in which Rutger Hauer's daughter is graphically filmed mainlining heroin, walked out during the first half hour. But those who stuck it out liked what they saw, says Schlattman. "And it was not an easy film with readily accessible characters and Syd Field profundities on the proper pages," he adds.

Lein's film, shot in black-and-white, played to packed houses in Rotterdam, and *Bad Apples* t-shirts, which the filmmaker and his entourage sold from a makeshift stand at the Hilton's lobby, were also a big hit.

In the shorts category, a program of films on 35mm, including Hal Hartley's *Flirt* and Jim Jarmusch's *Cigarettes and Coffee*, drew hordes of locals, while a similarly diverse screening of 16mm shorts failed to attract the masses. Yet several of the 16mm entries, including Columbia film student Ethan Spigland's 23-minute mock-documentary about film criticism, *The Strange Case of Balthazar Hypolite*, impressed those who did attend. At a Q-and-A session that following the screening, several of the makers were present, including Becky MacDonald, a programmer for the Mill Valley Film Festival, whose *One Single Life* was a touching portrait of two eccentric neighbors; Constantine Limperis, whose *Robert Manholecoverman* was inspired by his noisy New York City neighbors; Henry Hills, an experimental maker whose *Little Lieutenant* offered a collage of images set to music; and Jason Berlin, a bearish-looking film student whose black-and-white short, *Gone*, had the feel of a dream. The makers said they viewed short films as more than a calling card for Hollywood. "I feel committed to shorts, although it seems hopeless sometimes," said Hills. Similarly, all complained about the lack of a market for shorts in the U.S.

West Coast makers Steven Ozaki and Caveh Zahedi also premiered their new shorts in Rotterdam. Ozaki's *The Lisa Theory*, about a grunge band singer who is dumped by her boyfriend, was a departure for the San Franciscan better known for his documentaries. Participating on a panel with West Coast makers Jon Moritsugu (*Terminal USA*), Adrian Velicescu (*The Secret Life of Houses*), and the Los Angeles-based Zahedi (*I Don't Like Las Vegas Anymore*), Ozaki complained about the lack of an independent film community on the West Coast. "The competition for funding creates an



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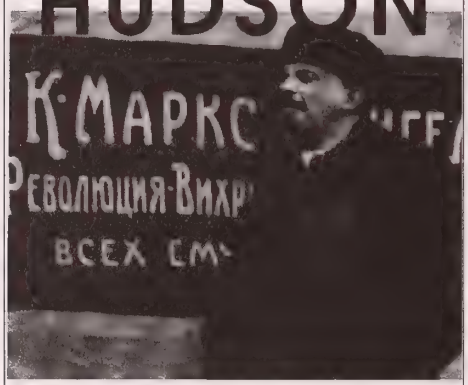
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atmosphere of distrust," he said. Ozaki then had to fend off insulting comments about his film from fellow maker Zahedi, who admitted to having taken the drug Ecstasy prior to the discussion. Howard Feinstein, a freelance journalist hired by the Rotterdam staff to moderate panels throughout the fest, did an excellent job of mediating what could easily have become a sparring match between the northern and southern Californians.

Several intimate works by veteran U.S. filmmakers Richard Leacock, Jonas Mekas, and Stan Brakhage were included in the festival's Master Home Movies sidebar. Other films and documentaries with the look and feel of home movies, including Ross McElwee's *Time Indefinite* and Gregg Araki's *Totally F***ed Up*, rounded out the program. A number of segments from ITVS's *TV Families* series, including Tamara Jenkins' *Family Remains* (which won the prize for Best Short Film at Sundance) and Andy Garrison's *Night Ride*, were screened at the festival. James Schamus, coordinating producer of the series, attended Rotterdam's CineMart to promote the package to foreign TV buyers. At press time, ITVS had submitted the series to PBS for consideration and was awaiting word from the network as to whether or not it would be included on the fall schedule.

Independent films from the U.S. were well received both at this year's festival and at the CineMart. But the true stars of the festivities were an array of Sixth Generation filmmakers from China, whose works were screened in Rotterdam despite protest from Chinese authorities. During a panel discussion with several of the filmmakers, moderator Tony Rayns conveyed how difficult it is for makers working outside the studio system, such as Zhang Yuan (*Beijing Bastards*), who need to find their own funding as well as screening and distribution outlets. Although the Chinese government curtailed filming on Zhang's latest film after just one week because *Bastards* had screened at the Tokyo Film Festival without government permission, most of the panelists seemed optimistic about the future of independent cinema in their homeland. "There are at least a dozen makers producing films and documentaries in Beijing," said Tian Zhuangzhuang, director of *The Blue Kite*. Wang Xiaoshuai, whose *The Days* screened in Rotterdam and in this year's New Directors series at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, added that there should be more opportunities for independent makers in China, but having to self-distribute the films makes it even more of a challenge. "From my point of view, I'm a producer. I can't distribute my films and if no organization will do it, people won't see them," she said. Although Rotterdam is noncompetitive, this year's Fipresci prize, awarded by the an international jury of film critics, went to *Red Beads*, the love story of a nurse and her institutionalized patient by Sixth Generation filmmaker He Yi.

As Schamus observed, Rotterdam, with its unyielding commitment to world cinema, is "one of Europe's least white festivals." In addition to the extensive compilation of films from Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, this year's main program included selections from Tadjikistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, and Cuba. Moreover, an annual sidebar, Limits of Liberty, screened films banned in their home countries, including the German documentary *Beruf Neonazi* (which was pulled from Berlin's market after protests ensued about whether the film's content was balanced) and the Vietnamese feature *Forgive Me*. A third film, *Decline of the Century*, about fascist Croatia during World War II, was scheduled to screen under the Limits of Liberty banner. Ironically, however, a press release issued during the fest stated that the Berlin Festival, which wanted exclusive rights to screen the film, "put pressure on the producer to withdraw the film from Rotterdam."

In addition to screening world cinema, Rotterdam supports Third World makers through the Hubert Bals Fund. Named after the festival's founder, the fund offers a total of $400,000 annually to be used for project development, production/postproduction, and distribution. Among 1993's 13 recipients was Zhang Yuan (*Beijing Bastards*), who received funds to develop a new project about homosexuals in China.

My gripes about this year's festival are few: first, Rotterdam should consider printing an English-language version of its daily festival trade newspaper so non-Dutch speakers can understand more than the three pages a day written in English; second, the audience polls reported in the paper seem somewhat skewed as certain screenings had no one at the door handing out rating cards and others had no one collecting them. Lastly, and in my case most important, when handing out earphones for simultaneous translation, make sure they work. In what was a most fitting conclusion to an unusual Rotterdam experience, I attended a sold-out evening screening of Hou Hsiao Hsien's *The Puppetmaster*, which was shown in Chinese with Dutch subtitles. Arriving just before the lights dimmed, I found a free seat at the center of an aisle and squeezed past numerous muttering Dutch compadres before realizing I had neglected to fetch earphones from the rear of the theater. My neighbors grudgingly allowed me to pass once more, but when I returned to my seat, adjusted the headset, and heard only static, I didn't dare get up again. The next three hours were spent watching the wise, old puppetmaster and Hou's breathtaking landscapes *sans* sound. When the film hits New York, I'll be first in line.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

ROTTERDAM's CINEMART:

Front&Center

Santa Monica-based filmmaker Craig Schlattman, whose feature At Ground Zero premiered this year in Rotterdam, knew little about the CineMart before he touched down in the Netherlands.

In fact, he had scheduled his return flight for just one day after the start of the four-day market, which runs concurrently with the festival. Yet the filmmaker says he was so bowled over by the extensive list of international directors, producers, distributors, and bankers slated to attend the coproduction forum, he phoned his airline in hopes of extending the visit. After a fabricated tale of a broken leg failed to win the sympathy of a KLM agent, Schlattman departed as scheduled, but not before crashing a cocktail gathering expressly for filmmakers selected to participate in this year's CineMart.

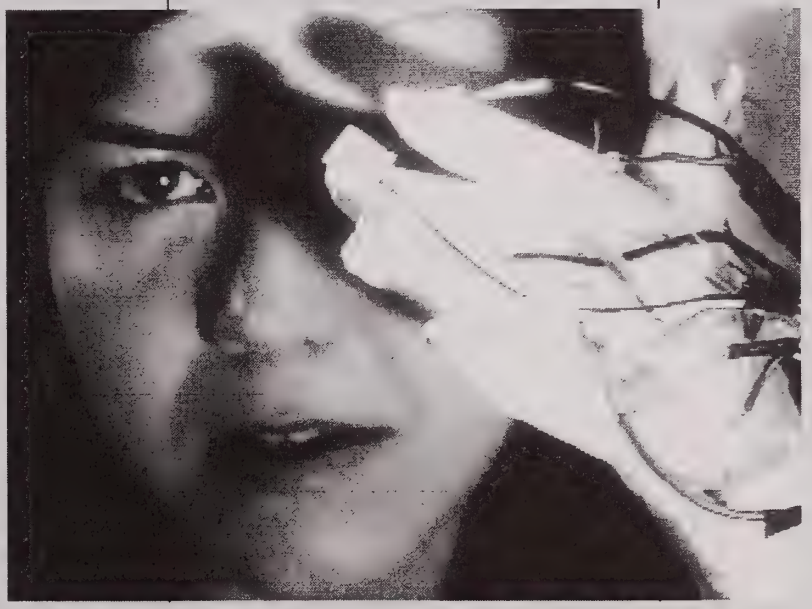
"I thought it might be my one chance to meet a possible producer for my new film, or a distributor, or [to find] financing opportunities," he explained upon his return to the West Coast.

Schlattman, who did indeed establish overseas contacts during his brief CineMart experience, is not alone. Due to its reputation for pairing makers with prospective funders and distributors, the CineMart continues to increase in both size and scope, despite a sluggish European economy.

"The market is thriving," says producer James Schamus, who for seven years has served as an unpaid CineMart consultant, suggesting potential U.S. projects to coordinators Janette Kolkema, Wouter Barendrecht, and Sandra den Hamer. "It's not just an appendage of the festival. It's at its center."

Started 11 years ago by former fest director Marco Müller, the CineMart boasted 51 preselected projects this year—eight more than last—and hosted a record 400-plus attendees. In addition, the U.S., with 13 projects represented, had a stronger presence than ever before.

The increase could be attributed to the first-time involvement of the Independent Feature Project (IFP), which scouted out projects, encouraged makers to submit proposals, organized submissions, and enlisted Agfa as a sponsor so more Americans could attend this year's market. But as the IFP's Rachael Shapiro emphasizes, her organization did not participate in the CineMart's selection process. Returnees to the CineMart from the U.S. included Steve Buscemi (*Pete*) and Ilkka Jarvilaturi (*Darkness in Tallinn*), both of whom came bearing new scripts for future projects. Other screenplays up for grabs in Rotterdam ranged from Tom DiCillo's *Box of Moonlight*, an existential action film, to Beth B's *Visions of Excess* and Sara Driver's *Two Serious Ladies*, both adaptations of texts by women writers.



Lynn Herschman's video *Virtual Love*—a tale of love in cyberspace—garnered attention at this year's CineMart Courtesy videomaker

Throughout the event, held at the Hilton, the makers chatted up their projects at meetings prearranged by the CineMart staff and attended panel discussions on topics including Coproducing with TV Stations, The Decline of the European Market, and How to Get into the U.S. Market. With its informal approach and noncompetitive atmosphere, the market has helped to distinguish Rotterdam from other European festivals that simply screen completed films. Says fest director Emile Fallaux, "We are not merely a showcase, but an activist festival working on behalf of filmmakers."

As the CineMart is far less sales-driven than larger markets such as Cannes and Berlin, success stories are fewer and farther between. But they do exist. This year, two projects that received some funding as a result of contacts established at last year's market—Jarvilaturi's *Darkness in Tallinn* and Belgian director Claudio Pazienza's *Sottovoce*—were screened at the festival. Rotterdam, however, lost a third project, Steve McLean's *Postcards From America*, to Berlin after the larger fest required exclusive screening rights, Kolkema says.

Although many U.S. independents compete for limited funds on home turf, at the CineMart, there seems to be plenty for everyone. San Francisco-based videomaker Lynn Hershman, a first-time attendee, received a "strong commitment" to finance her new $60,000 feature *Gaze*, about computer invasion and the way women are viewed, as well as two new commissions from European TV channels and found a party interested in broadcasting *Virtual Love*, which screened at this year's festival.

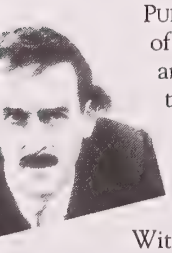
Larger-budget projects, such as DiCillo's $3-million *Box of Moonlight*, received piecemeal offers from funders willing to front a few thousand dollars each. But the filmmaker was encouraged by the interest. "My most important meetings happened by chance," he says.

While few deals were penned on the spot, DiCillo and representatives of the 12 other U.S. projects on offer this year achieved their primary goal of establishing contacts that could eventually pay off. Although the four-day schmooze-a-thon ended officially on February 3, the CineMart bureau will remain open throughout the year. The application deadline for next year's market is October 1, 1994. Application packages, including a script, a 10-page outline, a tape of an earlier work, and a budget outline, should be mailed to: The Rotterdam International Film Festival, PO Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, the Netherlands, Attn: CineMart; tel: 31 10 411 8080; fax: 31 10 413 5132. For more information, contact the IFP at (212) 243-3882.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

PUBLIC TELEVISION AT THE CROSSROADS





PUBLIC TELEVISION HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO CONSIDERABLE SCRUTINY of late. Political opponents have questioned its "balance" and challenged its receipt of federal funding. Those within the public television system are wondering how it must evolve to survive within a reconfigured, multichannel universe, with competition from cable, satellites, pay-per-view, and video on demand—a far different environment than when public television was created.

With this in mind, the Twentieth Century Fund commissioned a task force to evaluate the state of public television today. The Twentieth Century Fund, founded in 1919, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank that analyzes economic policy, foreign affairs, and domestic political issues. Over the course of eight months, the 23-member Task Force met to wrestle with the fundamental question, "Is there still a need for noncommercial television as we know it?"

Their findings were published last year in a 188-page book titled *Quality Time? The Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Public Television* [available through the Brookings Institute: (202) 797-6258; excerpts reprinted here with permission from the Twentieth Century Fund, New York]. As intended, the report triggered debate among public television's critics and allies and percolated through the pages of the *New York Times*, *Current*, and, most notably, the December 1993 issue of *Harpers Magazine*, with Lewis H. Lapham's withering essay "Adieu, Big Bird."

Presented below are excerpts from the Task Force's executive summary and from the "Supplemental Comment" by Task Force member Eli Evans. Having worked for the original Carnegie Commission (which created public television in 1967) and served on the second Carnegie Commission in 1979, Evans brings a understanding of public television's history, its original vision, its accomplishments, and its failings. Missing from the Task Force and much of the subsequent debate is the independent producers' perspective. *The Independent* asked Ralph Arlyck, a longtime documentary maker and member of AIVF's advocacy committee, to comment on the Task Force's findings. Arlyck's works, which include *An Acquired Taste*, *Godzilla Meets Mona Lisa*, and *Current Events*, has been broadcast on PBS, the BBC, and screened at INPUT and top international film festivals.

Executive Summary

FROM *QUALITY TIME? THE REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND TASK FORCE ON PUBLIC TELEVISION*

The Task Force's recommendations constitute a blueprint for change. The majority of Task Force members are convinced that only by reinventing itself can public television meet the needs of the American public in the twenty-first century.

Indeed, driven by an immense increase in the menu of programming available, the fragmentation of the overall television audience is likely to continue. In this context, the broad national values, the linkages among educational experiences, the in-depth coverage of public issues, and the common cultural experience that the best of public television can offer seem of greater value than ever. The Task Force does not believe, however, that these lofty goals are attainable without substantial revision in the existing system.

Among the Task Force's principal conclusions are the following:

• *The mission of public television should be the enrichment and strengthening of American society and culture through high-quality programming that reflects and advances our basic values.* Commercial television is driven by a concern for the marketplace that does not necessarily capture many of the values we hold dear, such as excellence, creativity, tolerance, generosity, responsibility, community, diversity, and intellectual achievement. Without public television, there would be no alternative to programs driven fundamentally by the need to sell products. While commercial television excels at reporting the news and occasionally produces works of quality and importance, its fundamental and necessary values are reflected in the fastest growing segment of the television industry: the cable shopping networks that do away with programming altogether and simply sell. The Task Force believes that alternative programming must be available that enlarges the horizons of the American people and informs them of the issues—past, present, and future—that affect their society. Public television must never assume the role of arbiter of our values, but it can serve as a medium for their expression and debate.

• *To fulfill its mission in an environment of intensifying competition, technological change, and economic stringency, America's system of public television needs fundamental structural change.* There are 351 public television stations in the country, many of them with overlapping signals and duplicative schedules. Programming is seriously underfunded. Of the $1.2 billion spent in the public television system in 1992, approximately 75 percent of the funds were used to cover the cost of station operations. Our conclusion is straightforward: There must be a dramatic shift in resources toward programming that can achieve the high standards of excellence needed to allow public television to compete successfully for the viewers' attention as well as public and private support.

• *Federal funding of stations' operations should be eliminated and the resources earmarked for national programs.* The appropriation for public television in Fiscal Year 1992 was $251 million, half of which was distributed to the stations as general grants. The Task Force believes that there is waste in overhead and in the needless duplication of programming. Therefore, given that federal funds come from American taxpayers, those dollars should be earmarked exclusively for national programming that will serve the nation as a whole.

Photos courtesy MacNeil Lehrer Productions, WNET & PBS.

• *Individual station operations should be supported by the communities they serve.* While recognizing that many local public television stations will be unhappy with the conclusion that federal funds should be directed toward national programming, the Task Force urges local stations to identify the needs of their communities and raise the funds necessary for their operations from within the regions they serve. They should be substantially reassured by the fact that, as all the evidence suggests, local support of stations is heavily dependent on the quality of national programming.

• *Federal funding should be increased to enable public television to provide a high-quality, national alternative to commercial broadcasting, provided the above recommendations are adopted.* If the above recommendations are adopted, the Task Force believes that federal funding for national programming should be increased to help public television provide the highest quality of programming for education (preschool, K-12, colleges and universities, and lifelong learning), public affairs, science, history, and the arts. The uniqueness of public television cannot be taken for granted. Many stations, in response to popular demand and in order to attract more subscriptions, schedule reruns of commercial programs like *The Lawrence Welk Show*. To sustain quality programming, public television needs and deserves the wholehearted public support that we now give to public schools, libraries, and museums.

• *Ideally, national funding of public television should come from new non-taxpayer sources of funding such as possible spectrum auctions or spectrum usage fees.* The Task Force recognizes that it is difficult to impose any further burden on the American taxpayer at a time of budget deficits. We recommend alternative sources of funding for public television: specifically, public broadcasting should receive a share of the prospective proceeds of spectrum auctions or spectrum usage fees—proposals that are both currently under consideration in Congress.

• *Educational programming must be expanded and commercialization resisted.* Public television has been a pioneer in education, particularly in programming for preschool children. *Sesame Street* is an outstanding example of one of its earlier efforts. However, public television's mission in education must also contain an emphasis on lifelong learning, including job retraining and literacy, and must strive to foster an understanding of the challenges and opportunities posed by the enormous cultural diversity that characterizes American society. Public television's educational and instructional efforts must be adequately financed to ensure that they continue to provide an alternative to commercial efforts in these areas.

The problem of commercialization does not rest solely with schools that serve children commercials along with their ABCs. The Task Force is concerned about recent reports that some public television stations promote the sale of toys as "premiums" to children during on-air pledge drives.

• *The delivery and dissemination of instructional programming must be upgraded.* Public television makes available many worthwhile programs to public schools, colleges, and universities. However, there is major room for improvement. To remain competitive with commercial programming for schools (that may not be better but only easier to use), public television must go beyond the old technique of over-the-air broadcasting of educational materials and make greater use of video cassettes and new interactive technologies.

• *The selection process for the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) should be improved.* In order to ensure the quality and independence of public television, the Task Force urges that the president select a nonpartisan committee of outstanding individuals to recommend qualified candidates for seats on the CPB Board.

The Task Forces notes that the CPB has been charged by Congress with monitoring station programming for balance. It urges the Board of the CPB to exercise its oversight authority with an eye to balance throughout the schedule, and not within each and every individual program. ❑

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Sue Yung Li
Independent producer, PBS series *Cities in China* & A Taste of China

Margaret E. Mahoney
President, Commonwealth Fund

Lloyd N. Morrisett
President, Markle Foundation

Steven Rattner
General Partner, Lazard Freres Co.

Lesley Stahl
CBS News correspondent, Co-editor of *60 Minutes*

Stuart F. Sucherman
President, Hilton/Sucherman Productions

The Honorable Timothy E. Wirth
Counselor for the Department of State

Robert J. Wussler
Consultant to the Media

Mortimer B. Zuckerman
Chair & Editor-in-Chief, *U.S. News & World Report*, and Chair, *The Atlantic*

Chloe W. Aaron, Task Force Executive Director
Fellow, Twentieth Century Fund

Richard Somerset-Ward, background paper author
President, RSW Enterprises

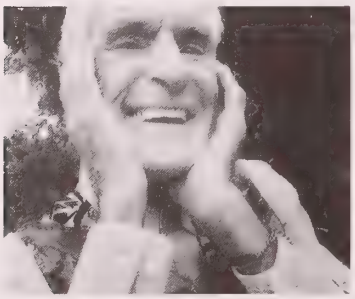




LET US EMBRACE THE LESSONS OF HISTORY

By Eli N. Evans

There are critical choices to be made in the next few years by the American people, which will determine the system of telecommunications for the next century. Each stage of broadcasting history—from radio to television and now telecommunications—has begun with stated high ideals of public interest service, only to be swamped by commercialization. Such will be the fate of the multichannel environment, just as it has been for the promise of cable television, unless steps are taken now, at the beginning, to assure that the public interest is respected and encouraged. From history, we know that the marketplace will seek out mass tastes, and that profitable outlets will squeeze out the less profitable. The marketplace will be neglectful of the requirements of an informed electorate, the cultural needs of children, the potential of family education, the needs of the poor, the potential of those without literacy, the hopes of the immigrant, the aspirations of the working adult eager for skills and training. Many channels mean many opportunities to serve, and local public broadcasting entities, in partnership with cable, computer, and telephone companies, can help forge a more varied system of many public channels to meet the many diverse needs of the American people.



I have closely watched public broadcasting evolve for 26 years, having had a staff relationship with the report of the original Carnegie Commission on Education Television in 1967, which conceived the name and concept of "public television." For 10 years thereafter, I worked for the Carnegie Corporation as their grants officer for public broadcasting and served as a member of the second Carnegie Commission in 1979. This task force then represents my third policy look at the system, over almost three decades, and I believe it is time for some plain talk.

Two profound concerns accompanied the first Carnegie Commission, both of which have turned out to be prescient and unhappily valid. One was that congressional appropriations would bring a political dimension and political influence to program decisions. There were misgivings that Congress would become a major audience, enveloping decision-makers with fear of controversy and the hesitancy to experiment, stifling risk-taking and fresh ideas by bureaucratic self-protection. The second concern was that the recommended new organization—the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)—would not be of sufficient prestige to act as buffer for the system, especially if its Board members were chosen from a political process that also would ultimately politicize the system. Independent governance and dedicated funding were at the core of the Commission's recommendations, but the Congress and the President did not have, in the Commission's words, "the faith to be free." It was understandable. All this was new, and theories of independence and the success of the BBC funding model in England gave way to the practicalities of the legislative process. Whatever mistakes were made in the initial structure and finance—unrestricted presidential appointment and annual appropriations were compromises that had to be made to get Congress to pass the first Public Broadcasting Act—we can now correct if we can learn from our quarter of a century of experience.

The Lessons of History

Let me first address the issue of organizational leadership and give some historical context. In 1967, the original Carnegie Commission saw the new Corporation for Public Broadcasting as the critical leadership entity for the future. It recommended that its members should be of the highest quality, representing the best in America from the arts, sciences, and the humanities, from the academy, business, and law. It should be equal in stature, the Commission felt, to the U.S. Supreme Court. The people's broadcast entity deserved, the Commission believed, America's most visionary thinkers. The Commission urged that the CPB be quasi-governmental, obtaining substantial private support from foundations and individuals "for which it is not answerable to the government" and that its Board act as a board of trustees for "a sacred trust," selecting its own subsequent members, only half of whom would be presidential appointees.

It was even discussed, although not mentioned in the 1967 report, that the new corporation should not be located in Washington, but in New York or Los Angeles, within a creative community, so that it would not act like a government agency. While the form was enacted, none of the more fundamental recommendations survived the legislative mill, and the system today has evolved into a culture that is much more governmental and political than was originally conceived.

Earlier commissions have urged, as does this Task Force, a more careful process of appointment. But no president has yet done it. Previous presidents have wanted to control it; some have considered it an ideological creature of political importance, relegating it to power politics; some have wanted to reward big contributors or used the vacancies as plums to be traded for votes on other legislation. Of course, many good people have served on the CPB Board in the last 25 years; however, I have talked to many of them over the years and even the best expressed feelings of disappointment and frustration because of overt White House and congressional interference and inappropriate influence.

The entire history of public broadcasting since 1967 has been shaped partially by this failure of the CPB to evolve into one of the nation's most respected institutions. The model the 1967 Commission had in mind was a board similar in stature to the Board of Governors of the BBC in England, leading a new American entity that would evolve into an institution "which must be vital and dynamic...of great significance in American society." The politicalization of public broadcasting by the Nixon presidency, especially, caused severe reactions. The Watergate tapes and his presidential papers are clear on this point: seize control, he advised his aides, get rid of "anti-administration" commentators, appoint loyal people to the CPB Board, and, to put teeth into his objections to an independent system, he vetoed the first public broadcasting authorization that provided advance multi-year funding. After the Nixon White House appointed 11 out of 15 members, the CPB Board voted to discontinue all funding of public affairs programming and tried to remove all program funds from the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). The resulting deep mistrust of Washington by local stations created a climate of suspicion and acrimony that has continued for decades. The stations wanted to be protected, and they reacted by building a more forceful and aggressive PBS. The growth of Community Service Grants (sending federal funds to each station) as an ever higher percentage of each federal appropriation was a result of shattered faith, political mistrust, and a survival mentality that fueled lobbying by the stations. They needed a nationwide base of support in every state or they risked being engulfed in political crossfire every time a U.S. senator or an angry president

L&R: Timothy Leary (photo by Phil Parmet) and Nigel Roble with NYC JHS 22 essayists (photo by Thomas Dallal), from the upcoming ITVS series *Declarations: Essays on American Ideals*. Courtesy ITVS. Above: *I Promise to Remember: The Story of Frankie Lymon*, from the *Matters of Life and Death* anthology series, photo Louis C. Liotta, courtesy PBS.

did not like a program.



A New Start

It is time to begin again, to sweep away this history and create a new national entity that will lead the system into a new world. A new public telecommunications entity should be established, which might be called a National Endowment for Public Telecommunications or, as the Task Force suggests, a Corporation for Public Telecommunications. It must be visible, prestigious, elevated as a public-private partnership, entrusted with the destiny of the system, and able to take the long view beyond the collective self-interest of stations, in a world in which the outlets will not be called "stations," only channels of service. It must adapt the system to new technologies and turn its attention to the potential of computers, video discs, and digital technology to meet the educational needs of the American people.

History gives the presidency of Bill Clinton the opportunity to reassess, break with the past, and build a new system of telecommunications, with a new definition of the public interest, drawing the best from the past, but with an eye on the horizon. At the least, as the Task Force suggests, the President can ask institutions representing cultural leadership in America to recommend names for a new board and select from this pool of nominations. Names of leaders from all fields should be available, including poets, writers, actors, composers, filmmakers, directors, leaders in the arts, in new technology, and in broadcasting. Selecting some people from the world of the arts would dramatize that no matter how complex the technology, stations and systems and structures do not make the programs, creative talent does. Moreover, such a board would wed the system to America's most creative thinkers. And upgrading its membership to something to which the most prominent people in America would aspire would restore trust, elevate its purpose, its vision, and thereby its capacity for accountability. Rather than gradually making a transition from the present structure, it is time to cut ties with the past and begin anew.

Dedicated Funding

Hand in hand with visionary and respected leadership is the absolute requirement of independence that can only come from an assured, adequate, insulated, nonpolitical funding source. Without it, the system is fatally flawed because the last two and a half decades have plainly shown that the United States cannot escape the problems faced by government-funded broadcast organizations all over the world. Each Commission has been concerned about this question, but each one has worried about offending Congress, or major broadcast interests, for not being "practical" and undermining future appropriations. Without tracing the many instances of subtle and not so subtle influences through the years, it is clear that some form of dedicated funds must be found for a system that, in the words of the second Carnegie Commission, should be "publicly funded yet quintessentially private." From a federal perspective there are already accountability safeguards in the system. Since federal funds amount to only 17 percent of the total funding, the federal government should depend on local control, local boards of trustees, multiple channels, viewer support, state and local funding, and a distinguished national board for accountability and free up federal funding so that it can be devoted to creativity, diversity, and national experimentation.

The first Carnegie Commission recommended an excise tax on television sets to be dedicated to public broadcasting, similar to the English system that finances the BBC. With the prospect of government auctions for spectrum space in the future, this Task Force Report, I believe, is wise in its recommendations. Spectrum space belongs to the American people, and just as ranchers must pay a fee for grazing their cattle on public lands, so should those broadcasters and other services pay who "graze" on the public airways. Some portion of income derived from the spectrum, whether auctioned or fee-based, should be dedicated to a public use so that what is available in the American home and schools will serve an educational and cultural mission beyond the marketplace. That would allow a few channels of television, in the words of the original Carnegie Commission, to "be neither fearful nor vulgar [but] a civilized voice in a civilized community."

It should give every American a sense of the wasted potential that the United States spends one dollar per person on public broadcasting while the Japanese spend $18 per person and the British $38 per person. Additional funds will be needed, especially in a multichannel environment, that will bring the opportunity to create a range of services which must be programmed with flair and originality. Publicly funded literacy channels, children's channels, channels for high school dropouts to earn diplomas, open universities, and other new channels of service will have to be created nationally yet be linked to local stations and nonprofit educational and cultural institutions. And every local station will have local C-SPAN type channels to cover state legislatures, city councils, and election debates. Increases in funding over the next four years, especially if some of it were earmarked for new channels of service, would yield educational dividends for generations.

The Public Interest Redefined

Unfortunately, many people in public broadcasting view the telecommunications revolution with deep alarm, even fear. A board member of a major station recently said to me, "They will chip away our best programs. We'll be left with nothing unless we produce innovative programming." This Task Force believes most ardently that in a multichannel world, the mystical, democratic ideal we call "the public interest" will dictate a new visionary calling for public telecommunications.

Now is the time to set things straight and embrace the lessons of history. We cannot turn away from government funding simply because a system flawed at birth has not worked well enough. The original system recommended by the 1967 Carnegie Commission has not been tried, and there is too much of the people's work to be done. We must return to the idealism that gave public broadcasting its birthright, even as it faces the challenges that summon the best people this country has to offer to lead the system through the complex multichannel world into the twenty-first century. It is difficult to convey to the American people all the programs they do *not* see: they can only imagine the roads not taken out of fear of controversy, the ideas that never get a chance because of a risk-averse bureaucracy, the ease with which the ordinary crowds out the original.



Of one thing I am sure: set the system free; give it the funds it needs; insulate it from fear of Congress; turn the future over to our wisest and most creative leaders; attract the best talent our country has to offer; provide it with multiple channels into the home; open it to the creative impulse and make common cause with the dreamers, and I am certain that the American people will be better informed, and more profoundly served, even inspired, at what such a new system might accomplish. ❑

WHY INDEPENDENTS SHOULD BOTHER WITH PUBLIC TV

BY RALPH ARLYCK

WHEN I WAS A HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE, I PURSUED A GIRL FOR NEARLY A year without one sign of reciprocal interest. In fact, there were a number of signs to the contrary. These I ignored. It could only be a matter of time before she realized that I was what she required to make her life complete.

Does this remind you of anything? Independents have been getting "Bug-off, jerk" signals from public broadcasting for quite some time. The people in DC and Alexandria are clearly into dating upperclassmen and college guys ($5-million series, international coproductions, corporate underwriting), and yet we persist. To most of us, public television officers remain the center of our funding firmament, while for them we are more like pimples that won't go away. The difference is that as high school suitors, most of us eventually did get the message and moved on. As producers we've been standing around with that hang-dog look for over a decade. Does this make any sense?

Now comes the Twentieth Century Fund report to confirm our worst fears. Yes, the report says, the system has many screwed up priorities and needs drastic revision, but, in the implementation of that overhaul, the tens of thousands of us around the country are barely an afterthought. You don't have to read too far past the list of Task Force members to predict this: 21 corporate and foundation heavies and Sue Yung Li (who seems to fulfill the minority, independent producer, and female slots, and probably a few more). Otherwise, no filmmakers, no artists, no academics, no writers, no community organizers.

Sue Yung Li's principal profession is landscape architecture, but she has made a few films on the side and has had some dealings with public television stations. Li finds it frustrating, she says, that so few Task Force members had actual production experience. She says she did her best to introduce specific issues of access, funding, and broadcast, but that most of the other members seemed to feel such questions fell into the category of "micro-management" and were not the sorts of things with which the Task Force should concern itself.

How can we read something like this report in a non-parochial mode? You don't want to go through it the way a friend of my grandfather used to sift through stories in the newspaper, asking 'Is it good or bad for the Jews?' It should be possible for us to look at the work of this group (and at the institution of public television itself) with some detachment, through the eyes of an average, thoughtful citizen.

Let's start with a premise: When you strip away the lofty language these kinds of blue-ribbon panels tend to bring back—"excellence," "innovation," "not beholden to the marketplace," and all those other notions that depend so much on the biases of the beholder—what is the one concept that remains? I think it's *difference*. All the other stuff is too laced with interpretation and class prejudice. The one thing everyone seems to agree upon is that the system should find a way to give us all that we're not going to get on the other 499 channels. The question then becomes how you get there. Or at least, who should be a major part of the conversation that tries to figure out how you get there. Isn't the answer obvious? *We* should, the outsiders, the people who *bathe* in difference. But we're not; never have been. Instead it's, "I know, let's ask Lesley Stahl for a fresh take on television."

Given this kind of limited perspective, the Task Force has come up with a document that seems reasonable and honest. We shouldn't be cavalier about the work that has been done here. The report isn't visionary, but it has a common-sense quality that could make a difference in the upcoming battles to prevent the system from shortly turning into a quasi-commercial fourth network. It's not clear what specific follow-up plans the Twentieth Century Fund has to see that its recommendations have a shot at implementation.

The report's tone is a mixture of criticism and reverence. It points up the flaws in the current setup, while taking care to genuflect to all the familiar golden idols: *Sesame Street*, *Nova*, *MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour*. (Do *you* watch *MacNeil/Lehrer*? Myself, I'd rather work on Schedules A and SE of an IRS 1040.)

The following are what I take to be the heart of the Task Force recommendations:

- *The system needs more money.*
- *Federal money should continue to be a part of that, but* all CPB *money should go into programs, rather than being handed to the stations to spend as they see fit.*
- *New, and hopefully politically-shielded, sources of income should be developed (like spectrum fees, taxes on hardware, etc.).*
- *Local stations should be more involved in the issues faced by their communities, and should be supported financially by those communities.*
- *The recent drift toward commercialism (increased corporate underwriting, more explicit spots and logos, etc.) should be reversed.*
- *The CPB Board selection process should be de-politicized.*
- *Ideological balance should be a goal for the whole schedule, not for each individual program.*

Accompanying these recommendations, in the explanatory text, were some facts and bits of language that I found noteworthy:

- *"The Task Force believes that nothing should impede the ability of public television to be innovative, to take risks, and to tackle interesting and controversial subjects in forceful and creative ways."*
- *"Between them, three stations provide about 60 percent of the national schedule. More than 300* [out of 351] *local stations contribute nothing."*
- *"The Task Force believes that public television's criteria for the success or failure of programs must be different from those used by commercial television. Ratings are neither an adequate nor an appropriate criterion."*
- *"Independent producers are particularly disadvantaged by the fact that most national programming is produced by several large stations.... Independent producers working in other areas of the country find it hard to gain access to the national schedule—partly, at any rate, because their local stations are not in the business of producing programs."*
- *"Too many stations are saddled with expensive studios and equipment, primarily (sometimes exclusively) to produce auction and pledge week programs."*

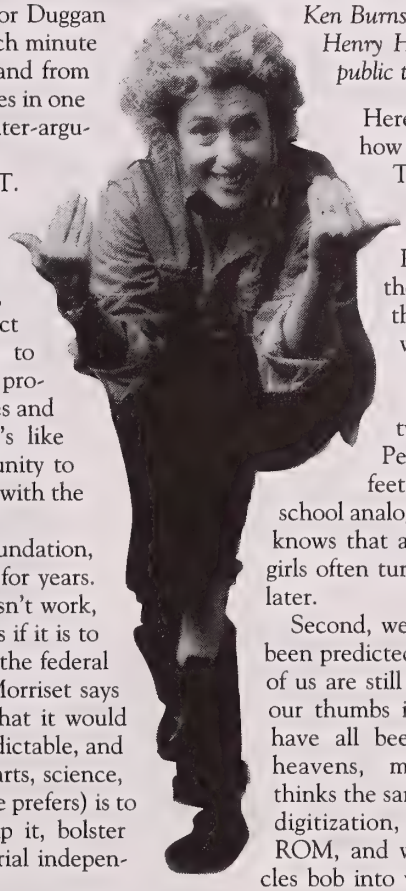
For some reason this last one floored me. A number of my independent producer friends spend a fair amount of time doing commercial work, but I've *never* known one who owned equipment solely for the purpose of producing demo reels.

In any case, I doubt that the Task Force's solution, which is to deprive the stations of all federal money (which comes in the form of Community Service Grants, or CSGs) is going to strengthen the system. I think smaller stations should be *encouraged* to produce for the national schedule—either with their own staffs or with independents. Keep the CSGs, but earmark them for production—no federal money for carpets. And, as independents, we need to forge better links to these stations. When was the last time you spoke to anyone at your local station?

Just as interesting as the report itself are some of the minority comments that follow it, because they give us a glimpse of some of the ways the Task Force's recommendations are going to be resisted. The "Supplemental Comment" by Eli Evans is printed in this issue. Here are some of the more interesting dissenting views of other Task Force members:

Ervin S. Duggan is a former FCC Commissioner. He became president of PBS in 1993, after the Task Force finished its deliberations. Duggan opposes the recommendation to cut off federal funding to the stations and to redirect it toward programming. He also doesn't want to give up the requirement of balance within individual programs. The thrust of his argument seems to be that shows that are not internally balanced tend to piss off Congress and thus place the whole apparatus in jeopardy. (His apprehension seems like a perfect illustration of the need for one of the other Task Force recommendations: political independence for CPB.)

Come to think of it, neither the Task Force nor Duggan really go far enough in this area. I believe that each minute of each program should be internally balanced, and from now on, I plan on juxtaposing any notion that arises in one of my films with an immediate, mitigating counter-argument.



Reno, in *Declarations*, courtesy ITVS; (right) Ann Magnuson in "Made for TV" on *Alive from Off Center*; photo Tseng Kwong Chi.

Henry R. Kravis is Chair of the Board of WNET. He too opposes diverting CPB money from the local stations, and he doesn't see why it should be a problem that 60 percent of the national schedule is produced by three stations (WGBH, WETA, and his own). He also believes it's a distinct advantage to independents across the country to have to funnel their projects through the major producing stations, because of the large infrastructures and support services these stations can offer. That's like expecting squirrels to be grateful for the opportunity to store their acorns in large, warm bear caves, what with the roominess and warmth such caves afford.

Lloyd N. Morriset is president of the Markle Foundation, which has been deeply involved in media issues for years. Morriset believes the current funding system doesn't work, and that public broadcasting has only two choices if it is to avoid marginalization: The first alternative is for the federal government to fund all national programming. Morriset says this would rule out most political content but that it would have the virtue of making funding secure and predictable, and would let the system get on with its work in the arts, science, and education. The second alternative (the one he prefers) is to get rid of federal funding altogether—just dump it, bolster other funding sources, and enjoy complete editorial independence.

It struck me that what is being offered here is methadone versus cold-turkey, neither of which has proven very promising with dependent bodies like public broadcasting. I actually like the Task Force's recommendation to make a concerted push for an idea that's been around for a while—a dedicated, stable fund tied not to congressional appropriations but to fees generated from public use of the airwaves. This would keep the system accountable but would lower the political stakes. We could think of it as legalization.

Richard Somerset-Ward isn't a Task Force member. He's a 21-year BBC staffer who was commissioned to write a major background paper that takes up the bulk of *Quality Time*. Ward gives us a nicely condensed history of public broadcasting and then frames the issues that the system is going to face in the next decade.

There's not enough space here to look extensively at Ward's 101-page paper. So, if I may be forgiven the methodology of my grandfather's friend, let's see what he has to say about us. This is quite doable, since we are mentioned only once in the 101 pages. (ITVS also gets a couple of passing references.)

Under a sub-heading "The Producers," he lists the figures that public television cites for the sources of its programs:

Public television stations	**42%**
Independent producers	**19.4**
Children's Television Workshop	**16.1**
Foreign producers & coproducers	**14.0**
Other	**8.4**

Ward says "These figures hide a lot of subtleties." Unexplained among those subtleties is the definition of what constitutes an "independent producer." In this domain he seems to swallow the system's figures whole, since a few paragraphs later he lists *Frontline* as being 80 percent independently produced. (Even Congress didn't buy that one.) He then goes on to say:

Independents can frequently be heard demanding an even bigger share of the pie, but it has to be said that the shrillest voices are often those of the least talented. However great their initial difficulty in getting themselves noticed (and more importantly, funded), the really talented ones like Ken Burns (The Civil War *and many other documentaries) and Henry Hampton* (Eyes on the Prize) *have produced some of public television's most important and successful series.*

Here we have the clearest encapsulation you can find of how the public TV establishment regards independents: Those who produce something that gives the system a lot of notoriety and prestige are retroactively enshrined, and forevermore institutionalized. Public broadcasting draws them to its bosom. The thousands of others are tossed onto an immense pile that is encircled with a chain-link fence and posted with a sign reading "Shrill & no-talent."

This brings us back to the key question: If that's the way they see us, why bother? I think there are two answers. The first has to do with staying power. Persistence is part of who we are. We're light on our feet, and we hang in there. And, if I can flog that high-school analogy a bit further, anyone who's been to a class reunion knows that a number of those former nerdy guys and awkward girls often turn out to be doing interesting things 10 or 15 years later.

Second, we don't really have as many alternate routes as had been predicted. For all the promise of the new technologies, most of us are still out there on the "information superhighway" with our thumbs in the breeze. Cable, videocassettes, and satellites have all been developed to, my heavens, make money. Who thinks the same will not be true of digitization, fiber optics, CD-ROM, and whateer other miracles bob into view? Public television is the only institution statutorily mandated to deal with us. (The Public Telecommunications Financing Act of 1978 directed CPB to reserve a "substantial" portion of program dollars for independent producers, with Congress later specifying that "substantial" meant at least 50 percent of available funds.) We should stay interested in it for the same reasons that Eli Evans says the general public should stay interested—because the marketplace is not going to be any more invested in most of us than it's invested in an informed electorate, the cultural needs of children, family education, literacy, or immigrant aspirations.



We know something from past experience. There are people in Congress and other institutions who are extremely open to the idea that the "public" in public television means something, and that independent producers are crucial to that meaning. We shouldn't stop talking to those people just because the high rollers seem to be forever having a private chat; we need not always let institutions like the Twentieth Century Fund always call the tune. We ought to be taking the initiative in a continual evaluation of the system's performance.

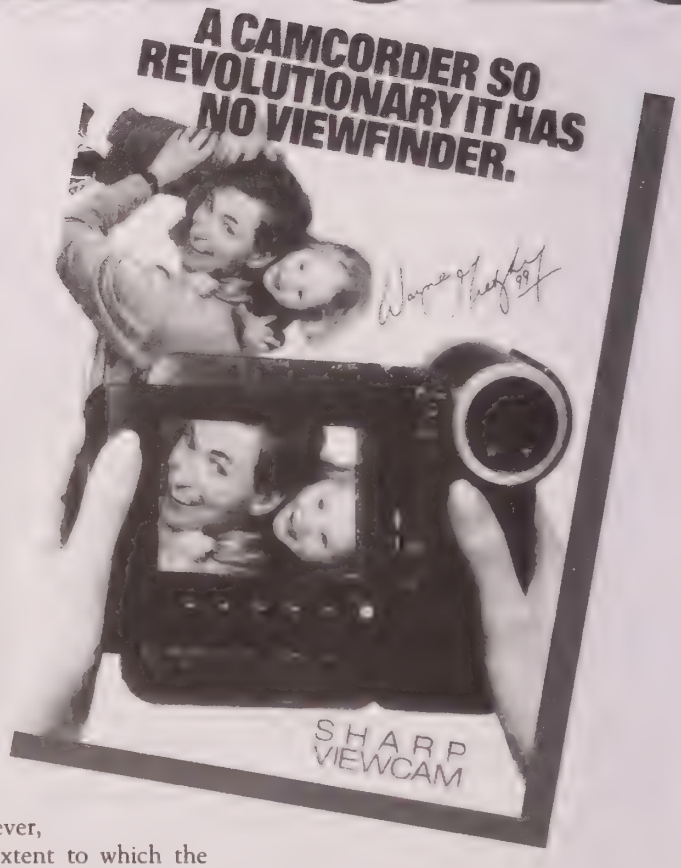
We are public broadcasting's bastard heirs, whether they want to acknowledge us or not. We're absolutely central to their mission. The Twentieth Century Fund has probably gotten their attention. Now it's up to us to help them find the road home. ❑

CAMCORDERS

We're now a nation of camcorder owners. But has the camcorder democratized the media?

BY LAURIE OUELLETTE





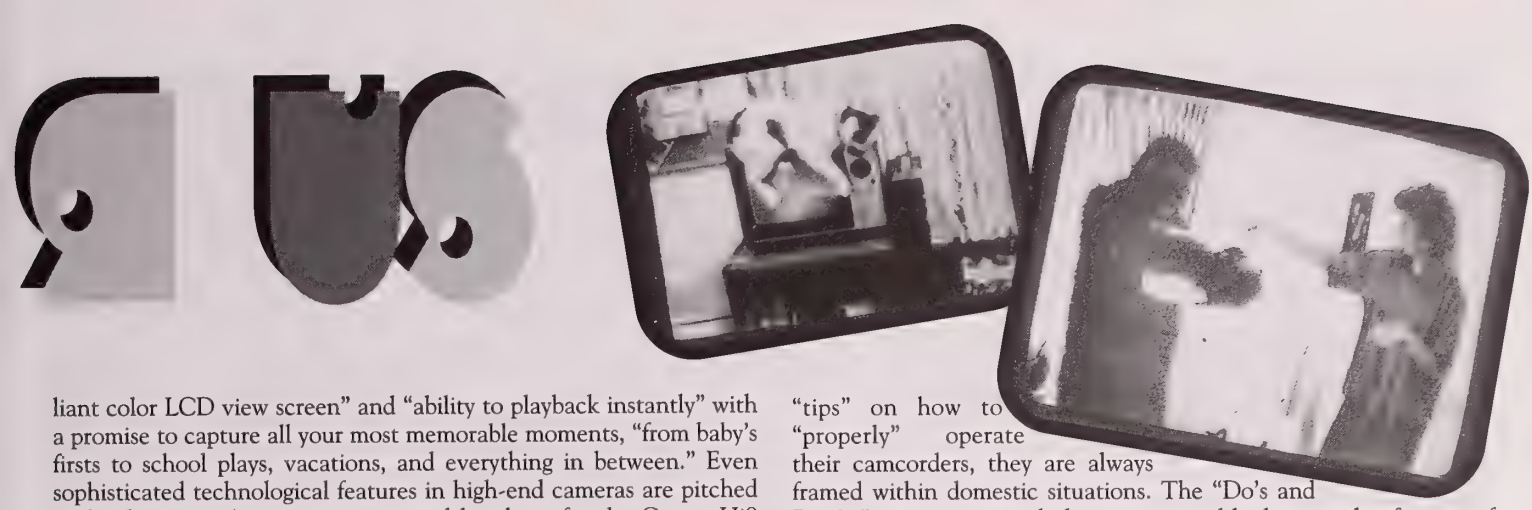
PERHAPS ONE OF THE GREATEST IRONIES TODAY concerns the so-called "video revolution." The creation of electronic media was once restricted to a handful of giant media corporations, but now anyone with a camcorder can be a producer...or so the story goes. What remains unsaid is that this revolution is happening only in production, not exhibition—and especially not in television. While mainstream television has made much ado about its use of "amateur" video, the few citizen-produced images that actually get on TV represent only a lopsided sliver of what's actually out there. In contrast to the diverse low-format video that appears on television in other parts of the world, U.S. broadcasters seem to have slept through the real camcorder revolution—or, more likely, they have deliberately sidetracked it.

According to industry figures, video camcorder sales rose phenomenally throughout the 1980s—the decade Sony, Panasonic, JVC, and other electronics manufacturers perfected the technology required to produce smaller, less expensive models for a nonprofessional consumer market. While in 1985 only 500,000 Americans owned camcorders, today that number has reached an estimated 16 million, or one in six households. Worldwide, there are an estimated 40 million camcorders in the hands of individuals. Rapidly falling prices and increasing miniaturization are expected to accelerate the popularization of consumer video technology throughout the 1990s.

However, the extent to which the proliferation of consumer video equipment has "democratized" the media system remains highly debatable. Personal camcorders have indeed provided a means for activists, independent producers, and citizens to create a diversity of images hitherto unavailable on mainstream TV. Yet the fact remains that the vast majority of consumers are not using their camcorders in oppositional or even particularly challenging ways. Nor are they flooding cable access centers with tapes or, as audiences, seeking out grassroots camcorder-produced shows. Why is this so? If the problem is no longer access or affordability, it becomes a question of "taste," that is, exposure, conditioning, and ideology.

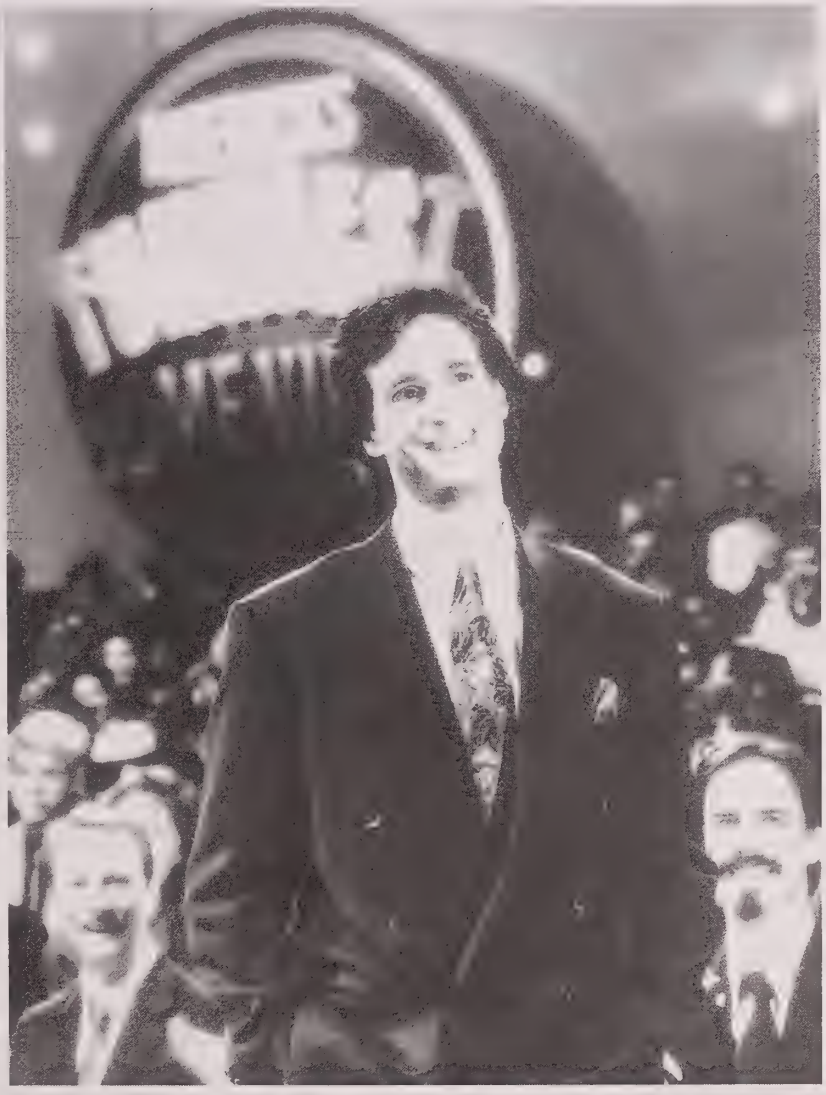
Where does this mindset come from? One need only to flip through a few camcorder advertisements or tune in to a "reality" show featuring camcorder media to get a sense of the way in which certain practices are encouraged and legitimated while others are ignored. Equipment manufacturers have been particularly influential in positioning the camcorder within the boundaries of family documentation and ritualistic leisure practices—just as they did with the home movie camera and the Brown Box Brownie. Even though the technological features of the camcorder are considerably more sophisticated than the "point and press" camera and are often fetishized to compete with rival brands and last year's models, the industry consistently downplays any uses beyond the family video snapshot.

A recent ad for the Panasonic Compact Camcorder depicts a smiling infant and a larger-than-life image of the product, alongside the promise that this camcorder is so advanced it can "shoot by the light of one birthday candle." Sharp's new Viewcam wide-screen camcorder, one of the most expensive models on the market, sells its "bril-



liant color LCD view screen" and "ability to playback instantly" with a promise to capture all your most memorable moments, "from baby's firsts to school plays, vacations, and everything in between." Even sophisticated technological features in high-end cameras are pitched in family terms. A recent promotional brochure for the Canon Hi8 camcorder highlights that model's built-in features: graphics, titles, and background music designed to give your home video "a slick, finished feel." Choices include "holiday greetings," "happy birthday," and "vacation"; bridal choruses and kiddie tunes like "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"; and cartoon images of storks, wedding bells, and Easter bunnies.

The commercial media have also played a central role in structuring how consumers might use their newfound ability to create electronic images. ABC's phenomenally successful entertainment program *America's Funniest Home Videos* is perhaps the most obvious example. From the outset, this program has maintained a very friendly relationship with the camcorder industry. In the first season, ABC helped promote the sale of camcorders by allowing manufacturers to distribute their wares to ABC affiliates, where viewers could come in and try them out. ABC also distributed coupons to video retailers enticing camcorder buyers to send in their "funny" home video footage. By the second season the program was first in the national ratings and as many as 2,000 tapes were arriving daily. Camcorder sales began to soar noticeably, leading one camcorder industry executive to proclaim a "great sales month in the history of the camcorder."



***America's Funniest Home Videos*, with host Bob Saget, is the model in most Americans' minds for the potential of camcorders.** Video stills p. 34-36 courtesy Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.

While *America's Funniest Home Videos* rarely ventures beyond slapstick gags (an infant vomiting on a man's head; a woman's skirt falling down) and self-deprecating humor (a woman whose hair is tangled in her dishwasher; an overweight teenager stuck in an inner tube), the program has nonetheless worked to reinforce the family mode of camcorder usage. When host Bob Saget gives TV viewers "tips" on how to "properly" operate their camcorders, they are always framed within domestic situations. The "Do's and Don'ts" segment is regularly accompanied by home video footage of potentially funny family moments spoiled by operator failures and technological glitches.

Despite the show's populist pretensions (producer Vin Di Bona claims the show is "home grown" and really "produced by America"), clips sent by viewers comprise a mere fraction of the show (typically less than seven minutes), while stylized wraparounds and commentary by Saget give the show its shape. Even the video clips themselves are conventionalized with background music, sound effects, and off-screen analysis by *AFHV* producers. Despite the enormous numbers of tapes received, only the most self-deprecating domestic moments are selected for broadcast. Needless to say, no authentic "populist" work or grassroots video ever comes close to broadcast here.

It's one thing when the networks' entertainment divisions trivialize nonprofessional video; it's quite another when this happens in their news departments. As early as 1989, an ABC news special hosted by Ted Koppel and titled *Revolution in a Box* informed television viewers that while the vast majority of consumers were using their camcorders just as they were expected to do (chronicling and documenting themselves and their families), some were using video to dismantle the gatekeeping power of TV news. Despite this rather subversive premise, citizen participation in the production of news was marginalized and discredited throughout the program.

While the use of amateur video in revolutionary movements in other countries was celebrated on the ABC show, discussion of consumer video in the U.S. was presented as not much more than cam-

corder hobbyists "accidentally" capturing potentially newsworthy events on tape. Moreover, the "experts" gathered for the program worried that amateur video could subvert the "objectivity" and "credibility" of professional journalism if left unchecked. Of particular concern were "activists" who may not be content to shoot random events like tornados, but might actually invest their camcorder images with social or political relevance.

Television news departments have since developed several strategies to control the impact of amateur video. Some local stations have taken their cue from entertainment shows like *America's Funniest Home Videos*, inviting viewers to submit humorous footage for soft news segments with names like "Cincinnati's Funniest Videos" and "Washington's Wackiest Home Videos." More often, news programs frame citizen-produced images in ways that undermine their credibility while upholding the authority of professional television journalism. A strategy pioneered by CNN and adopted by many news stations has been to actively solicit camcorder footage, but to define it as "amateur" and relegate it to "spot" news, such as sports, weather, accidents, and natural disasters.



Even George Holliday's ubiquitous video footage of Los Angeles police officers beating Rodney King was originally framed in trivializing terms, labelled "amateur" and "accidental." Shortly after the beating, *USA Today* described the situation as Holliday just wanting to "play with his new toy." The extensive media coverage of the King beating, however, meant that Holliday's footage could not be contained within the usual frameworks. Discussions of consumer camcorder practices made their way into the popular press, where it was finally revealed that activists and community groups had also been regularly using camcorders to document police brutality and to create programming for cable access television. But it did not take long for a new set of invalidating terms to emerge. "Video vigilantism" and amateur "surveillance" were identified as the ugly underside of America's new fascination with camcorders. As one *Newsweek* commentator put it, "Big Brother is now your neighbor. All these people running around with video cameras are playing with dynamite."

Despite such warnings from the news media, video vigilantism has become increasingly prevalent on entertainment television. Today there are nearly a dozen "reality" entertainment programs that encourage citizens to "participate" by sending in camcorder footage. *I Witness Video*, which debuted in the fall of 1992 with the stated goal of "tapping into the vast library created by American home video users," is one of the most interesting and revealing examples. Originally conceived and produced by NBC's news division, the program was transferred to the entertainment division after journalists and critics charged that the images emerging from the amateur video revolution had no business presenting themselves as "news."

The debut episode opened with an eclectic mix of camcorder images spread across a wall of televisions: a police beating, footage of a speeding race car, an underground encounter with a shark, and Chinese students marching under a revolutionary banner during the Tiananmen Square uprising. As host Patrick Van Horn explained, "Any revolution puts power in the hands of the people, and the video revolution is no different. With camcorders in hand, we the people don't just watch TV, we create programming that we can all watch on television."

Despite such rhetoric, the camcorder footage featured on the program has rarely been political (and least of all revolutionary). The debut episode showed the videotaped murder of a Texas constable who fitted his patrol car with a video camera and wireless microphone and ultimately recorded his own death. Follow-up episodes featured more murders along with such "video moments" as tornado footage and a pregnant woman jumping out of a burning building.

As *I Witness Video* has changed, so has its advice to viewers on the social meaning and acceptable usage of the camcorder. In early episodes, Van Horn regularly greeted viewers with statements such as "the video revolution is squarely in the hands of the people." By the following spring, all talk of revolution (as well as the footage of the police beating and the Tiananmen Square students) had been dropped from the program, while Van Horn announced a new goal "focusing on the many uses of camcorders, from the biggest scientific achievement to the most intimate personal relations." (The show that week featured a woman hit in the eye with a baseball and surveillance footage of a shoplifter sent in by a drugstore clerk.) Van Horn added that the real role of home video is to "chronicle our lives" and "bring us closer together." Not long afterwards, professional video was added to the mix and the amount of amateur footage reduced.

I Witness Video has since become increasingly sensationalized and conservative. Patrick Van Horn and his wall of televisions have been replaced with the more "respectable" host John Forsythe, while comments on the social role of the camcorder have been replaced with a standardized opening that promises "real people and real events." The program now appears even less concerned with "real people" making television than with exploiting moments of tragedy to achieve high ratings. The ratio of video "by the people" is currently less than half and has been reduced almost exclusively to natural disasters, accidents, and "touching" moments (a Montgomery Ward sales clerk saving a duck from a sewer gate; a lost horse who finds its way home).

The few segments where ordinary people are shown using video in any sort of thoughtful or deliberate way have been quite conservative (such as white teenagers driving around Los Angeles with their camcorders "documenting" rioters). Moreover, examples of the authoritative use of video by people and groups in powerful positions (such as police and combat soldiers) have proliferated. If *I Witness Video* was once a space where new ideas about the use of camcorders could be presented, that space is rapidly closing down.



The reality of *The 90's* on PBS: This PBS series featuring camcorder material was innovative, activist—and cancelled.
Courtesy *The 90's*

IF THE CAMCORDER OFFERS A MEANS TO DEMOCRATIZE TELEVISION, THAT potential can be reached only through social practices. In the U.S., cultural discourses such as advertising, news, and entertainment TV have consistently sought to shape the video revolution in ways that subvert real citizen input and uphold the authority of the existing media system. Two new efforts to document the political and social impact of camcorder media in the U.S. and around the world add new insight into this phenomenon: *Channels of Resistance: Global Television and Local Empowerment*, a collection of essays edited by Tony Dowmunt [British Film Institute, 1993; available through Indiana University Press] and *Shock Video*, a documentary produced by Home Box Office in conjunction with Britain's Channel Four (1994).

In *Channels of Resistance*, the quest to examine the potential for diversity and radical innovation in world television leads a number of writers to the camcorder. As Dowmunt points out in his introduction, low-cost video has become an indispensable tool for indigenous peoples seeking to assert and maintain cultural identity in the wake of an increasingly homogenized global media flow. The essays examining the impact of the camcorder on grassroots television practices in a global context will be of particular interest to independent producers and media watchers in the U.S. Given the persistent marginality of cable access and community TV in this country, it may come as some surprise to learn that similar ventures are thriving in Zimbabwe, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Brazil, and other developing countries, where they enjoy significantly less institutional support.

Why is this so? One major reason is that the advertising campaigns and media frameworks working to contain camcorder media in the U.S. are not as applicable or influential in other cultural contexts. Outside the consumer culture of the U.S., there are different constraints to community and grassroots camcorder practices (funding being the major obstacle). But audience acceptance is not a problem. The degree to which global audiences have embraced new forms of low-cost community television stands as testimony to how powerful such forces can be.

In the remote Aboriginal community OF Ernabella, Australia, for instance, the Ernabella Video Project has utilized cheap, low-tech equipment to create popular television programming by and for the indigenous Pitjantjatjarra people as a means to counter the images and messages from faraway consumer cultures. Typical programming revolves around tribunal customs and history, local practices such as medicinal plant gathering, and sacred ceremonies. In the Middle East, nonprofessionals have used personal camcorders to document daily life in the Occupied Territories in a series of "video diaries." Elsewhere, indigenous peoples ranging from the Inuit in the Canadian Arctic, the Indian peoples in Brazil and Bolivia, and the Maori in New Zealand are using low-cost video to create television programming specific to their cultures.

In Great Britain, grassroots media production fostered by camcorder technology is thriving to the point where it has begun to appear on mainstream television. "It seems that 'ordinary people,' nonprofessional broadcasters have never been more present on our screens," says British writer Jon Dovey. On Britain's Channel Four, programs such as *You've Been Framed*, *Opinions*, and *Free for All* enable audience members to become producers, offering their view on subjects ranging from current affairs to the TV medium itself. Moreover, the more mainstream BBC Community Programme Unit now equips citizens

with camcorders to produce stories for the phenomenally popular series *Video Diaries*, which has helped legitimate the aesthetic of homemade TV.

Several authors in *Channels of Resistance* cite American cable access television as a catalyst for the creation of grassroots television globally. Ironically, however, while groups like Deep Dish TV, Paper Tiger TV, and DIVA-TV have achieved some success in disseminating their programs widely, the influence of cable access in this country is rather miniscule. One notable exception is the *Gulf Crisis TV Project*. This four-part series was created by a coalition of activists and cable-access producers as a response to the dearth of oppositional viewpoints on mainstream channels regarding the Gulf War. The success of that project (which actually reached most of its viewers via public television) involved the combined mobilization of the anti-war and public access infrastructures, explain *Gulf Crisis* producers Martin Lucas and Martha Wallner. But the decentralized nature of cable access as it normally functions, combined with its limited viewership, render such cases the exception rather than the rule.

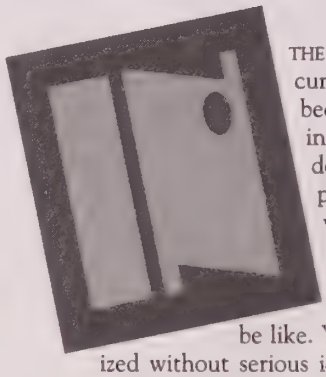
The marginality of grassroots camcorder media in the U.S. is made unflinchingly clear in *Shock Video*, HBO's recent attempt to sort out the place of the camcorder in a media-saturated society. Though this hour-long documentary purports to reveal "how the video camera has changed our world," activist and community uses of camcorders are barely mentioned. While the role of low-cost video in the Tiananmen Square student uprising and Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution are cited as powerful examples of camcorders in "the hands of the people," camcorder enthusiasts in the U.S. are depicted as "Little Brothers," obsessed with snooping on everyone from the babysitter to repairmen to unsuspecting neighbors.

Perhaps, as *Shock Video* suggests, we are an increasingly surveilled citizenry obsessed with "watching back" with our video cameras. Yet voyeurism alone cannot explain why sensational amateur "shock" video (such as the footage of Amy Fisher wishing for a Ferrari or the infamous couple caught having sex behind the mini-blinds) is constantly making its way onto TV tabloid shows, while thoughtful camcorder productions are not. The proliferation of shock video is not a simple reflection of how people naturally wish to use their camcorders. Grassroots camcorder media devoted to politics, community or social issues, or artistic expression are produced—but they do not get aired on commercial television. This gap is the result of efforts by television producers to encourage only those camcorder practices that uphold the status quo (and ratings) of mainstream television.



Current Affair's regular "Crimebusters" segment stands as a case in point. While the experts assembled for *Shock Video* worry that camcorder zealots have invaded our privacy, this tabloid program encourages amateur surveillance by handing out free camcorders to neighborhood groups in Harrison, Pennsylvania (one of the most conservative townships in the U.S.) and other towns so they can "document" local prostitutes. "We have gone beyond most tabloid shows to become 'proactive,'" claims one of the program's producers, while a clip shows a woman driving around town after dark, accosting and bickering with "hookers" and boasting about being a "video vigilante." The possibility that free camcorders would be distributed for less sensational types of community practices was not even suggested.

The rules by which commercial media define and control citizen "participation" in the production of television are sometimes internalized by amateurs. Take the case of the Home Video News Network, a 3,800-member strong organization established to help amateur news-gatherers sell their footage to local and network news stations. According to HVNN philosophy, "participation" in the news does not include shaping news agendas or any activity that might call into question established news-gathering operations. Rather, HVNN is a support network for people "who just happen to have a camcorder in the right place at the right time," says founder Larry Roberts. The HVNN promotional tape advises amateurs to look for unusual weather and accidents and to emphasize the "people involved in flames and wrecks." As one member put it, "The TV stations want anything that has smoke and fire coming out of buildings, or people hanging from the sides. They want the major trauma; that's what brings in the ratings."



In the early days of television, before the current system was institutionalized and became "naturalized" in the public mind, inventors and social visionaries imagined dozens of more populist and interactive possibilities. Today, the camcorder provides an opportunity to call into question the one-way flow of commercial television and to imagine what a more democratic broadcasting system could be like. Yet this potential is unlikely to be realized without serious ideological intervention on the part of media activists, advocates, and independent producers.

At a time when truly interesting and important camcorder media cannot find a place on commercial or public television (such as the video aired on *The 90's* before it was pulled from PBS and Globalvision's program on human rights abuses, *Rights & Wrongs*), explanations that reach outside the predictable (e.g., media monopoly or conservative censorship) must be sought. And in an era when too many cable access channels are being reclaimed and restructured by cable operators due in part to lack of citizen interest, questions beyond the dilemma of funding and accessibility must be raised. If citizens (and not only "progressives") are ever to be part of grassroots television as producers or audiences, it will be necessary to reclaim the video revolution and reposition the camcorder, before the "preferred" frameworks become as ingrained as plain old common sense. This work might be accomplished on a number of fronts: public outreach and awareness campaigns, counter-advertising, media literacy, video production about camcorder media, and direct action.

Such work should not be viewed as secondary to policy work or the promotion of cable access and community television. Nor should it be overlooked in activists' use of camcorders. As media theorist Sean Cubitt has argued on the arrival of consumer video equipment, "The growing challenge for the left is not merely to appropriate the necessary skills to utilize the new technologies, but to create new modes of collective working around them, to bring social and cultural requirements to bear on the process of manufacture." Despite the considerable forces working against the possibility of participatory TV in a consumer culture, the new potential offered by the camcorder—as witnessed by the rapid work on the part of dominant interests to control and contain it—is too important to ignore. If the left has somehow dismissed the idea of any real chance for widescale, two-way mass communication as utopian, we must, as Bertolt Brecht said long ago, continue to ask (and not assume) why that is so.

Laurie Ouellette has written about cable access and community TV for The Independent, *the* Utne Reader, *and numerous alternative weeklies. She is currently a doctoral student in communication/cultural studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.*

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BY KATHRYN BOWSER

THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER, DIRECTOR OF THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM- AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

DOMESTIC

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 7-16, IL. Sponsored by Facets Multimedia & founded in 1984, competitive fest searches for outstanding entertainment films, videos & TV programs for children. Entries screened by 2 ind. juries; one of children, other of filmmakers, critics, educators & parents. Both look for "content that speaks to culturally diverse audiences & is humanistic, non-exploitative & non-violent." Awards: Best Live Action/Animation from children's jury; Best Feature-length Live Action/Animation; Best Shorts (30-60 min., 10-30 min., under 10 min.); Live Action/Animation; Liv Ullman Peace Prize; Audience Award to most popular film. Prods must have been completed since 1992. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Liz Shepherd, Chicago International Children's Film Festival, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 281-9075; fax: 929-5437.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 6-23, IL. Now in 30th yr., event is one of largest US int'l competitive fests, programming films & videos produced in preceding 2 yrs. Cats: feature (Midwest premieres); doc (arts/humanities, social/political, history/biography); short subject (drama, humor/satire, films for children, experimental); student (comedy, drama, experimental, nonfiction, animation); ind. video (short, educational, animation, feature, experimental); ind. video doc (arts/humanities, social/political, history/biography); mixed film/video (short, doc, educational, animation, feature, experimental); educational (performing/visual arts, natural sciences/math, social sciences, humanities, recreation/sports); animation; TV prod; TV commercial. Awards: Gold Hugo (Grand Prix); Silver Hugo; Gold & Silver Plaques; Certificates of Merit; Getz World Peace Award. Each yr. features over 125 films, tributes, retros & special programs. Entry fees: $25-$225. Deadline: June 17. Contact: Chicago Int'l Film Festival, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610-9990; (312) 644-3400; fax: 0784.

CINEQUEST FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 9-13, CA. Dedicated to films of ind. vision & artistic, social, or stylistic merit, Cinequest is in 5th yr. & features world, US & Bay Area premieres. Fest highlights maverick films—features & shorts of all genres w/ groundbreaking artistic & social merit. Activities incl. seminars w/ topics incl. High Tech vs. High Art & Vision vs. The Bottom Line. Fest has also developed Maverick Grant Program, designed to aid ind. filmmakers w/ exhibition & distribution. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Halfdan Hussie/Ken Karn, Cinequest, PO Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172-0040; (408) 995-6305; fax: 277-3862.

FULL HOUSE EXTRAVAGANZA, Sept., NY. In last yr., Jack of Hearts Distribution has organized & exhibited several mini-fests in cafés, universities, theatres, bookstores & bars across US. Fest, organized by same company, is seeking to program 24 hours of short films in Albany in 1994; all themes, cats & genres accepted up to 59 min. Entry fee: $25. Format: 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: July 1. Contact: Michael Ellenbogen, Jack of Hearts Distribution, PO Box 3004, Albany, NY 12203-004; (518) 489-2037.

HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, HI. Founded 13 years ago, HIFF, under permanent theme, When Strangers Meet, aims to promote cross-cultural understanding among peoples of Asia, N. America & Pacific through presentation of films, discussions, workshops, symposia, special awards & media events. Fest has grown into one of premiere cultural attractions in Hawaii w/ int'l impact & foremost showcase for new Asian film production. Entries of any length in all genres, incl. experimental, short, doc & features accepted; interested in US & world premieres. Film program travels across 6 Hawaiian Islands. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: July 30. Contact: Film Selection Coordinator, Hawaii Int'l Film Festival, 1777 East-West Rd., Honolulu, HI 96848; (808) 944-7635; fax: 949-5578.

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET, Sept. 18-26, NY. Now in 16th yr, this is only market devoted to new, emerging American ind. film. Held at Angelika Film Center, market is attended by over 2,500 filmmakers, distributors, TV & home video buyers, agents, development execs & fest programmers from US & abroad. Submissions accepted in cats of features (over 75 min.), shorts (under 60 min.), works-in-progress (edited scenes, trailers, intended for features), script (copyrighted, for feature). Separate membership & entry fees apply; all applicants must be current IFP members. Deadline: end of July. Contact: Rachael Shapiro, market director, Independent Feature Project, 132 W. 21st St., 6th fl., NY, NY 10011; (212) 243-7777; fax: 3882. IFP will be moving as of June 1 to: 104 W. 29th St., 12th fl., NY, NY 10011.

LAS VEGAS LITERARY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-6, NV. Open competition sponsored by Las Vegas-Clark County Library District accepts works adapted exclusively from literature, incl. features, shorts & videos. Fest incl. workshops on adapting literature into screenplay format as well as screenings & scholarly seminars on classic film adaptations. Prizes incl. transportation to fest & accommodations for winning entries' creative teams. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 30. Contact: Joshua Abbey, theater manager, Summerilin Library & Performing Arts Center, 1771 Inner Circle Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89134; (702) 256-2902; fax: 7228.

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 23-Oct. 9, NY. As major int'l fest & uniquely NY film event, 32 yr-old prestigious noncompetitive fest programs approx. 25 film programs from around world, primarily narrative features but also docs & experimental films of all lengths. Shorts programmed w/ features. Audiences usually sell out in advance & incl. major NY film critics & distributors. Press conferences after each screening w/ directors, producers & actors. Must by NY premieres. Presented by Film Society of Lincoln Center & held at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. Fest also programs 3rd edition of week-long **NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL** (Sept. 30-Oct. 8) at Film Society's Walter Reade Theatre at Lincoln Center. All lengths considered; will consider works-in-progress if they will be completed by late Sept. No entry fee; film-& videomakers responsible for r/t shipping fees for preview. Deadlines: July 15 (film fest); June 30 (video fest). When requesting appls, specify film or video fest. Contact: New York Film Festival, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, NY, NY 10023-6595; (212) 875-5610; fax: 5636.

OUT ABOUT AGE: FIRST LESBIAN/GAY/BI-SEXUAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL OF THE YOUNG & THE OLD, Sept. 17, CA. Produced by Artists' Television Access, San Francisco nonprofit media arts center, fest accepts submissions of films & videos produced by or about young &/or old sexual minorities (incl. lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender people 23 & under or 60 & over). New & older works eligible. All cats welcome, incl. animation, experimental, narrative, doc. Educational & promotional works encouraged. No entry fee. Formats: 16mm, 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: July 16. Contact: Curtis Draves, Adrienne Ferrari, ATA, 992 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 864-5855, ext. 3004.

ROBERT FLAHERTY FILM SEMINAR, Aug. 6-12, NY. Held in Aurora, NY, each summer, this retreat week of provocative experimental, fiction, animation & doc film/video screenings & discussions is open to interested participants who work in diverse media fields, incl. film/video makers, scholars, curators, distributors, critics, students & media aficionados. Guest curators select works around general themes; this yr. ind. curator L. Somi Roy will present program on Asian & Asian American film/video, juxtaposing work of Asian artists in

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Western states w/ peers in Asia. Film historians Erik Barnouw & Patricia R. Zimmerman will commemorate seminar's 40th anniversary w/ selection of films/videos "that have challenged & expanded independent documentary forms." Registration fee: $650. For registration info, contact: Sally Berger, exec. dir., International Film Seminars, 305 W. 21st St., NY, NY 10011; (212) 727-7262; fax: 691-9565.

FOREIGN

FLANDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IN GHENT, Oct. 4-15, Belgium. 21st edition of fest w/ main theme "The Impact of Music on Film"; in addition to int'l program, 1994 will focus on French cinema, featuring tribute to distinctive filmmaker or actor/actress next to retro of films from New Wave; tribute to Western films. Cash prizes worth 6,000,000 BF ($180,000) awarded. Main prize (Gilded Spur) incl., prod. grant of 3.5 million BF & distribution grant of 500,000 BF. Entry fee: $50. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 10. Contact: Jacques Dubrulle, secretary general, Flanders Film Festival, 1104 Kortrijksesteenweg, B-9051 Ghent, Belgium; 32 9 221 8946; fax: 32 9 221 9074.

LONDON FILM MARKET, Oct. 15-21, UK. Presented by Raindance, market will be held at newly constructed Warner Multiplex. Features, shorts & works-in-progress accepted. Last yr. 150 films from American, British & European filmmakers were screened to over 300 buyers from UK, US, Europe & Japan; some participants last yr. incl. Polygram, Feature Film Company, Artificial Eye, Metro Tartan, British Screen, BFI & Lumiere. Seminars & special events are set up for filmmakers to meet w/ buyers & discuss projects. Entry fees: $300 features, $250 works-in-progress, $150 shorts (under 30 min.). Deadline: Sept. 15. US contact: In Pictures, 13-17 Laight St., ste. 6-1, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0404; fax: 5656.

MANNHEIM-HEIDELBERG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 15-22, Germany. Competition for new ind. dramatic & doc features & shorts. Awards: Grand Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg (DM30,000) for Best Feature; support for German distributor of Grand Prize (DM 20,000); Special Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg in Memoriam Rainer Werner Fassbinder (DM 10,000) for best feature w/ most unique narrative structure (minimum 40 min.); Short Film Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg (DM 2,000) (under 40 min.); South German Broadcasting Corporation SDR Documentary Prize (DM 10,000 & purchasing of broadcast rights); People's Choice Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg (all genres, lengths); Fipresci, Interfilm & Jury for Catholic Film Work prizes w/ cash awards. Entries must be German premieres & must not have taken part in the official programs of certain other European film fests; completed w/in 12 mos. preceding fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Aug. 8. Contact: Internationales Filmfestival Mannheim-Heidelberg, Collini-Center, Galerie, D-68161 Mannheim, Germany; tel: 49 0 621-102943; fax: 49 0 621-291564.

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88-PAGE BOOK on camcorder cash opportunities: specialty videos, hot business trends, spot news ideas, hip tips, forms & more. Easy read. $19.95 (incl. S&H). 30-day, money-back guarantee. Rush to: James Carrasco, PO Box 1231, Madera, CA 93639.

FOR SALE: Sony 9800 3/4" deck w/ timecode card. Immaculate condition. Call 966-0625.

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SONY EVO-9700 HI-8 editing system $4,200; Sony PVM-1380 13" color monitor $320; Sony CCD-V5000 Hi8 Pro Camcorder w/ Sony LCH-V5000 aluminum carrying case $2,000. Call Chris (612) 929-5215.

Distribution

AFFABLE DISTRIBUTOR & AIVF member seeks quality ind. prods for exclusive worldwide distribution. If program is accepted, we will send contract in 7 days. Send VHS w/ SASE to Chip Taylor Communications, 15 Spollett Dr., Derry, NH 03038.

ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, distributor of ind. & experimental films, is always seeking new work. Send VHS copy to: Alternative Filmworks, Inc., dept. IC, 259 Oakwood Ave., State College, PA 16803-1698; (814) 867-1528. Incl. SASE for tape return.

AQUARIUS PRODUCTIONS seeks videos on learning disabilities, special ed., holistic medicine & coping w/ chronic diseases, among other topics. Call/send videos for preview. Contact: Leslie Kussman, Aquarius, 35 Main St., Wayland, MA 01778; (508) 651-2963.

ATA TRADING CORP., actively & successfully distributing ind. prods. for over 50 yrs., seeks new programming of all types for worldwide distribution into all markets. Contact us at (212) 594-6460.

CINNAMON PRODUCTIONS, 24 yrs. distributing ind. prods to educ., home video & TV worldwide, seeks new films & videos on social/minority concerns, human rights, environment, AIDS, Native Americans, drugs. 19 Wild Rose Rd., Westport, CT 06880; (203) 221-0613.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health-care markets. Fanlight Productions distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educ. markets. Educational Productions distributes videos on early childhood education, special ed. & parent ed. Contact: Linda Freedman, Educational Prods., 7412 SW Beaverton, Hillsdale Hwy., Portland, OR 97225; (800) 950-4949.

VARIED DIRECTIONS INT'L, distributors of socially important, award-winning programs on child abuse, health & women's issues, seeks select films & videos. Call Joyce at (800) 888-5236 or write: 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843; fax: (207) 236-4512.

Freelancers

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16MM & 35MM OPTICAL SOUND TRACKS: If you want high-quality sound for your film, you need high-quality sound negatives. Contact: Mike Holloway, Optical Sound/Chicago, 24 W. Erie, Chicago, IL 60010 or call (312) 943-1771, (708) 541-8488.

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BETACAM SP-BVW 507 LOCATION PKG: Incl. lights, Sachler 20 & audio pkg. $350/day. Crews avail. Betacam to Betacam w/ RM 450 controller. Off-line editing $45/hour. Window dubs, Betacam, VHS, 3/4" & Hi8 avail. Michael (212) 620-0933.

CAMERAMAN: award-winning, sensitive, efficient. 10 yrs experience in docs & industrials, overseas projects. Sony BVW-300A Betacam SP pkg (highest res. & sensitivity avail.). Rates tailored to project & budget. Can speak some Japanese. Scott (212) 627-1244.

CINEMATOGRAPHER looking for interesting projects. Credits incl.: *Metropolitan*, *The Night We Never Met* & *Barcelona*. John Thomas (201) 783-7360.

CINEMATOGRAPHER w/ doc, narrative & music video credits interested in shooting features, shorts & non-narrative films. Call Kramer to see reel. (212) 971-1940.

C4, BBC AWARD-WINNING doc directors, camera team, w/ Aaton pkg; verité, arts, plus remote films in Latin America, Himalayas, Asia, Arctic, Europe. Americans based in Britain, speak Spanish; will work in video. 011-44-494-675842 (ph./fax).

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ awards, talent & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs, shorts & music videos. Owner of Aaton 16mm/super 16 pkg. 35mm pkg also avail. Call for my reel. Bob (212) 741-2189.

DP/STEADICAM ARTIST w/ 16SR, 35BL, superspeed lenses, 3-chip camera & BVU 150 deck sound equipment, lighting, van. Passport. Certified Scuba diver, French, little Spanish. Features, commercials, music videos. Call Mick (212) 929-7728.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" column in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film/video community on development thru distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact Robert L. Siegel, Esq. (212) 545-9085.

ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER: Former AIVF exec. director & founding chair of ITVS has returned to legal practice. Have your project represented by lawyer w/ in-depth understanding of ind. prod., financing, distribution & public TV. Reasonable rates. Call Lawrence Sapadin (718) 768-4142.

EVERYONE NEEDS STORYBOARDS! Filmmaker/storyboard artist knows smaller films need storyboarding more than others. Time & money saved by working things out in storyboards. Will work w/ what you have. Call/write for samples. DAVE-IT, 2334 D. St., La Verne, CA 91750; (909) 593-1879.

EXPERIENCED DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri 16 SR pkg. & Mole Richardson lighting pkg. Seeks interesting film projects in feature or short-subject form. Very reasonable rates for new directors & screenwriters. (212) 737-6815; fax: 423-1125.

FILM & TV JOBS. National listings. Professional, technical & prod. Published 2x/mo. 6 issues/$35, 12/$60, 22/$95. Send check/m.o.: *Entertainment Employment Journal*, 7095 Hollywood Blvd. #815, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 969-8500.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS: Business Strategy Seminar offers 10-wk. strategy & support groups for entrepreneurs. Small-business owners challenge you to focus your energy & expand your horizons. Immediate results. For info, call Katherine Crowley (212) 481-7075.

STEADICAM for film & video. Special rates for inds. Call Sergei Franklin (212) 228-4254.

TOP-CREDIT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, West Coast: operator on major motion pictures & DP on lower budgets seeks hip projects. Self-owned 16mm & Betacam SP prod. pkgs; 35mm avail. Award winner, visionary. Reasonable. Call John (213) 656-3550.

PREPRODUCTION

CAMERAMAN needed for low-budget 16mm doc feature about politics & Hemp. Proximity to Kentucky a plus. Send resumé or reel to: Pan-Opticon Films, 1224 E. Broadway, Louisville, Kentucky 40204.

FLAN DE COCO FILMS announces nationwide search for new writers. We are young ind. prod. company looking for undiscovered talent to collaborate on development of features. Accepting submissions in any form (screenplays, plays, short stories, etc.). Send to: Flan de Coco, Box 93032, Los Angeles, CA 90093.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR w/ financing seeks unique script/project (low-budget feature). Fax synopsis/brief concept to: (212) 391-8327 or treatment to Stonecastle Films, 1481 Broadway, NY, NY 10036. SASE; no calls.

SCREENPLAY CONTESTS (all 35) offer $1.4 million in cash, publicity, representation, fellowships, etc. Do not ignore this route to success. For info on comprehensive screenplay contest book: Writer's Aide, 1685 So. Colorado Blvd., Box 237-C, Denver, CO 80222.

SEEKING DP, PM, CREW for low-budget ind. b/w road movie shooting this summer between NYC & Las Vegas. Some deferred pay. Send resumé/tapes to: Criminal Pictures, 358 7th Ave., ste. 116, Brooklyn, NY 11215.

SCREENPLAY DOCTOR & MOVIE MECHANIC. Professional story editors/post-prod. specialists will analyze your screenplay or treatment & evaluate your film-in-progress. Major studio & ind. background. Reasonable rates. Call (212) 219-9224.

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FILM EDITING SUITES for rent. Fully equipped editing rooms w/ 8-plate Steenbecks in luxurious bldg. w/ 24-hr. doorman. Midtown, 1 block from DuArt. Student rates. Please call Edward Deitch (914) 928-2682.

SUPER 8MM FILM-TO-VIDEO transfer. To 1", Beta, Hi8, 3/4", VHS. Slo-mo, freeze, Toaster EFX. Standard 8, slides, 16mm also. Broadcast quality. Low rates. Personal service. S-8 camera rental & music cinematography. Landyvision (718) 768-5257.

TOTAL S-8 SOUND FILM, video, audio. Prod. & postprod. Editing, sync sound, Amiga, Sound effects, animation, transfers, photos & slides, dubs, A&B, multimedia/SEG/broadcast titling, VHS, 3/4" Interformat video. From $10/hour. The Media Loft (212) 924-4893.

YOUR PLACE OR MINE? Beta SP Edit System w/ Sony 910 controller: $1,500/wk. Sony 3/4" deluxe off-line w/ Convergence Super90+: $500/wk. Studio in CT w/ guest room or delivery for fee. Beta SP field deck $175/day. Editors avail. (203) 227-8569.

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Conferences • Seminars

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE offers continuing seminar series in new media technologies. Jonathan Wiedman, exec producer, Propaganda Films; Bob Bejan from Interfilm & Viacom New Media creative personnel will demonstrate & discuss new products in development in "Interactive Hollywood" at 2 pm, May 14. $10 ($8 for museum members). For info, call (718) 784-4777.

CENTER FOR NEW TV in Chicago offers workshops in all aspects of beginning & intermediate video prod., multimedia & telecomputing. Taught by professionals in the video arts. For more info, call (312) 951-6868.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special FX & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on; all taught by professionals. For info, contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (914) 552-8760.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE ON MEDIA EDUCATION, on media literacy concepts, methods, resources & techniques, will be held July 31 to Aug. 5. K-12 teachers, administrators, educators & media professsionals encouraged to attend. For appl. & info: Institute on Media Education, 339 Gutman Library, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA 02138; (617) 495-3572.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

VIDEO EXPO/IMAGE WORLD, expo & seminar program for video prod., computer animation, graphics, multimedia presentation, digital imaging & prepress imaging professionals, held Sept. 19-23 at Jacob Javits Center in NYC. For more info, call: Janet Vargas, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc. (914) 328-9157.

Films • Tapes Wanted

21ST CENTURY, live interactive variety show on WMFP Boston, seeks videotapes of 5 min. or less that interact w/ show's text. For more info, contact: Richard Washbourne (415) 587-2296 or (415) 241-0664.

ALIVE TV is now accepting submissions of new films & videos. Experimental films, performance pieces, animation, narrative, shorts & essay works unique in content or style desired. Preference placed on work under 1/2 hr. *Alive TV* tries to be wake-up call to mainstream media (& PBS). Please watch program on local PBS station & only submit work that seems in sync w/ our goals. Help us survive as 1 of last nonmainstream programs on network TV. Send work on 1/2" or 3/4" w/ filmmaker's bio & film bio (awards, distributors, etc.) to: Neil Sieling, exec. producer, *Alive TV*, KTCA, 172 E. 4th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

ART IN GENERAL seeks works in all visual media for exhibitions/installations for 1994-1995 season. Submit resumé, entry form & SASE. For info, contact: Art in General, 79 Walker St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

BANANA CLUB, ind. prod. company specializing in networking w/ Japanese investors, producers, promoters, distribs, recording labels, TV networks & other media industries, seeks new materials in cinema, video, music & performing arts. Deadline: Ongoing. Send treatment, description, samples, press kit, standard release form & $20 filing fee to: Banana Club, 41 Union Sq. West, ste. 714, NY, NY 10003.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TV seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, at (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o *Screen Magazine*, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS accepts feature-length, shorts, animated, experimental, or docs of exceptional quality for Cinematheque program. Student works not accepted. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Ron Beattie, Center for Contemporary Arts, 291 E. Barcelona Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE, 1/2-hour, monthly news & public affairs program, shown on public-access stations across country, is looking for footage or produced pieces (1-30 min.) on Central America, Cuba & Haiti (especially Haiti, Salvadoran elections, return of Guatamalan refugees from Mexico). Also looking for someone in D.C. to tape interviews. Can't pay, but can cover costs of tape & mailing. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COLLECTING COLLECTORS, video screening series that celebrates people w/ passion for collecting, seeks everything from unedited tapes to feature films. Send VHS tape w/ SASE & description to: Danny Leonard, Center for Creative Work, 425 Bush St., ste. 425, San Francisco, CA 94108; (510) 527-4814.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENTS seeks film & video shorts (under 20 min.) in all genres, formats for D.C. "ind. showcase" program. Possible deferred payment. Send VHS or 3/4" copy (returnable w/ SASE) to: 1812 Ingleside Terrace N.W., ste #5, Washington D.C. 20010; (202) 232-5934.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor &

Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, looking for works by ind. producers. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly NYC cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-935 or fax: 9337.

THE EDGE, Denver-based media collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

THE E-TEAM, children's TV show w/ environmental theme, seeks film/video footage & completed works that maintain environmental, nature or science theme. Fees paid for footage used on air. Contact: David Calderwood, producer, Euro-Pacific Prod., (908) 530-4451.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm shorts, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, exper., doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FEEDBACK, anthology cable-access program of ind. work, is accepting work on 3/4", 1/2" or Hi8. Send tape & SASE to: N.A.M.E. Gallery, Attn. Video Commitee, 700 North Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), cable-access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred. No nudity.) Videos credited. Tapes returned. Mail to: Fem TV, PO Box 66604, Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, ste. 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks comedy shorts (under 10 min.) in all comedy styles/genres to air on LA

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HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, non-profit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

HOME GIRL PRODUCTIONS, consortium of women filmmakers, seeks home movies from lesbians for possible inclusion in feature length film. Proceeds from film will go to creation of lesbian film fund. Send inquiries or movies to: Home Girl Productions, 662 North Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069.

LACE (LA CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS), seeks videos exploring nature of tourism from both perspective of visitor & local inhabitant. Deadline: June 1. Submit 1/2" video, project description, current resume/bio & SASE ($2.90) to: LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, Ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW DAY FILMS, ind. media producers working w/ common vision, seeks energetic new members w/ challenging social issue docs for distribution to nontheatrical markets. Deadline: Sept. 1. Call (415) 332-2577.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originating on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Prod., 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, invitational fest in 5th yr. at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding reference file of S-8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 w/ file folder of support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, S-8 filmography, stills, photo of yourself & description of films. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

OPEN WIDE, weekly, half-hour TV series produced by CBC Manitoba that profiles best of alternative, underground & ind. cinema from Canada, US & world, seeks submissions. Looking for experimental, video art, comedy, drama, animation, docs & music videos between 30 sec. & 20 min. Submissions on 16mm, VHS, Hi8, 3/4", 1/2" or video. Film/video associations & distribs. should send catalogs w/ submissions. License fee paid if selected for broadcast. Submissions may be in any language from any time. Will acknowledge submission w/in 10 days. Send to: Open Wide, CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2G1, Attn: Shipping Dept.; (204) 788-3111, Gavin Rich, producer.

ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in 8mm, S-8 & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TV seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, Planet Central, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

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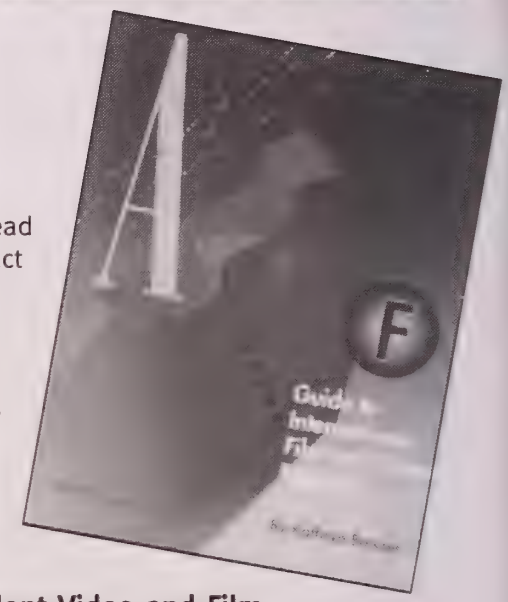
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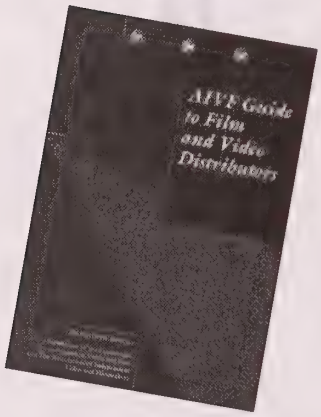
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AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors
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A must-read for independent film and video-makers searching for the right distributor. *The AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors* presents handy profiles of over 150 commercial and nonprofit distributors, practical information and company statistics on the type of work handled, primary markets, relations with producers, marketing and promotion, foreign distribution and contacts. Fully indexed, with additional contact lists of cable/satellite services and public television outlets, as well as a bibliography. This is the best compendium of distribution and information especially tailored for independent producers available.

Alternative Visions
Distributing Independent Video in a Home Video World
by Debra Franco
a co-publication of AFI and FIVF, 181 pages
$12.95/$9.95 AIVF and AFI member price



Video cassettes and video stores have changed forever the economics of distribution for all moving image media—including alternative films and tapes. What has happened to institutional markets? What promise does home video distribution really hold for non-mainstream work? Chapters cover selling to schools, libraries, and individual consumers. Includes detailed case studies of the marketing of eight independent works. Essential reading for anyone with an interest in home video distribution.

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for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from natural & physical science worlds. Contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017, (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE SECOND WAVE, coproduction of Sagebrush Productions (LA/Wyoming) & Women Make Movies (NY), seeks materials on women's movement for series. With 4 1-hr. programs covering 30-yr. period from 1960 to 1990, series will present accurate record of events & ideas, dispel myths & examine legacy of unfinished revolution. Individuals interested in making videotaped memoirs of their experiences, thoughts & observations of movement can contact Women Make Movies for list of questions to guide video sessions. Those w/o access to videotaping equipment may contact WMM for info about equipment access in their region. Archival materials, incl. home movies, still photos, posters & other graphics, slides of artwork & tapes of women's music also being sought. To submit material, or for additional info regarding series, contact: Terry Lawler, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, ste. 500, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606; 2052 (fax).

TV 2000, TV pilot, seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, seen by 9 million people on 42 broadcast & cablecast stations nationwide last yr., seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, animation, performance films/videos & media art under 28 min.s. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs preferred. Contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

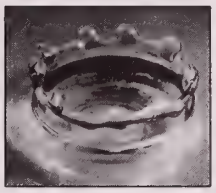
VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Greg Swartz, manager of broadcast projects & acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

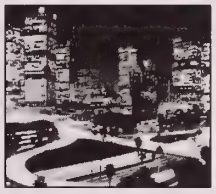
VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA and NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

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XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

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IND. PRODUCERS interested in working for NYC agencies in freelance media prod. are invited to participate in new database directory to be distributed through Crosswalks Television & other sources. Will link inds. w/ government agencies creating media. $10 registration fee gets listing w/ 1 update per yr. For more info & appl., write: SCS Productions, 244 W. 54 St. #800, New York, NY 10019.

MEDIA NETWORK seeks f/t administrator for Sponsored Project Program serving 300+ ind. producers w/ fundraising & admin. support. Some media exp., communication & admin. skills necessary. People of color, women, gays & lesbians actively sought. $22-26K commensurate w/ exp. Send resume to: Marina Feleo Gonzalez, Media Network, 39 W. 14th St., #403, NY, NY 10011.

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, School of Filmmaking, seeks applicants for teaching positions, all of which are for 1 yr. Positions are as follows: filmmaker-in-residence (2 positions). Will teach art & fundamentals of theatrical screenwriting. Positions requires string teaching & professional credentials & credits; filmmaker-in-residence (directing). Will work w/ students in developing & implementing theory & techniques of motion picture directing. Seek individual w/ substantial credentials in film & TV directing for f/t position. Should have demonstrated success in teaching & prod. Should be familiar w/ fundamental theories of acting & direction; filmmaker-in-residence (postprod.). Position will teach basic postprod. arts & tech. Familiarity w/ both film & video editing required; filmmaker-in-residence (visual design). Position would concentrate on prod. design & art direction for motion pictures & TV. Need substantial professional experience in film prod. design & art direction as well as story illustration; filmmaker-in-residence (critical studies). Position focuses on teaching courses in film history & theory. Submit letter of appl. & resumés to: Steve Montal, associate dean, N. Carolina School of the Arts, School of Filmmaking, 200 Waughtown St., PO Box 12189, Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2189; (910) 770-1330.

PRATT INSTITUTE in Brooklyn, NY, seeks instructor for audio design course in media arts dept. beginning this fall. Responsibilities incl. teaching techniques & aesthetics of audio design from recording to multitrack editing on 8-track audio work station for film, video & multimedia projects. Requires extensive experience in sound prod. & audio digital design for multitrack editing. Strong teaching record on college level. Send letter of appl., resumé & video work sample to: Chair, media arts dept., Pratt Institute, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11205. EOE.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI, School of Communications, seeks a tenure-track faculty member in television prod. to begin in August. Search will remain open until position is filled. Successful candidate will have appropriate background to teach basic & advanced TV prod. classes & will have commitment to producing & helping students produce programs for school's cable channel. Ideally, candidate will also be qualified to teach courses in broadcast journalism. Ph.D. preferred. Rank & salary commensurate w/ qualifications. Letter of appl., current resumé & letters of rec. should be mailed to: Dr. Lemuel B. Schofield, chair, search committee, PO Box 248127, School of Communication, Univ. of Miami, Coral Gables, FL 33124-2030. EOE.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL has published 32-pg. resource guide designed to help teachers use 7 African feature films recently released by California Newsreel in wide variety of college courses. Contains introductory essays on each film, teaching selections & select bibliographies. Expanded catalog enables colleges & public libraries to build in-depth video collections of African cinema. For free copy & more info, contact: California Newsreel, 149 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

CD-ROM ART/CULTURE MAGAZINE seeks contributors. Bicoastal, interactive multimedia pub. (accessible as computer interface) will incorporate video, text, sound & graphics. Seeking work from writers and artists in all media. Focus is on formal experimentation & mixed media compositions. Themes incl.: media critcism, cybernetics, found sound/imagery & info overload. Send submissions (film/videomakers should submit VHS format) to: GUSH metamedia, PO Box 3291, NY, NY 10185. For more info, contact Adam (718) 858-9379 or Jack (415) 776-9400.

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WIDE ANGLE seeks papers for publication in special issue on Children & Film. Looking for articles about children & cinema that address topics such as: theories concerning children's spectatorship, issues of spectatorship concerning images of children in films, child & youth

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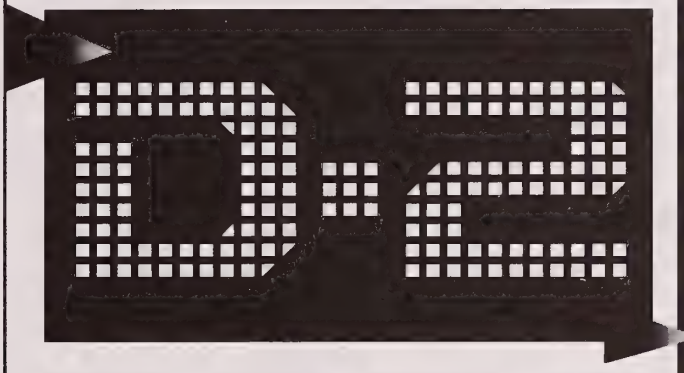
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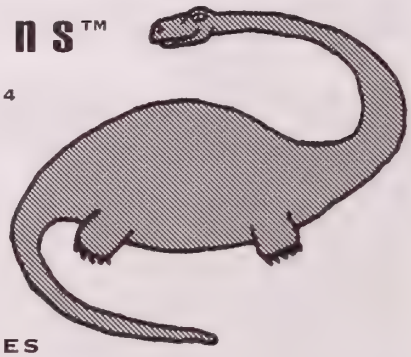
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Resources • Funds

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris (612) 341-0755.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of rec. from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., PO Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER (ETC), accepting appls for 5-day residency program in study of video image processing techniques. Open to US artists in all genres w/ prior experience in video. Deadline: July 15. Send 3/4" or VHS copy of recent work w/ SASE and choice of 5-day period from Sept. to Jan. 1995 to: ETC, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS Film Bureau offers financial assistance for film speaker's fees to nonprofit community orgs. in NYS. Priority given to groups showing works by ind. filmmakers, programs making attempt to pay artists fees commensurate w/ their worth & emerging community groups not ready for first appls. to NYSCA's Electronic Media & Film Program. Bureau funds only film presentations. Requests must originate from sponsoring org. Max. subsidy per org. is $1,000/yr. Max. subsidy for orgs. receiving NYSCA exhibition funds is $600/yr. Bureau offers speakers fees on sliding scale (up to $250 for local artists; $300 for artists traveling to sites that require overnight stay.) Deadlines: June 5, Aug. 15, Oct. 15. Contact: Duana Butler, FVA, 817 Broadway, NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

GERMAN AWARD FOR VIDEO ART competition, organized by the Südwestfunk and the ZKM Karlsruhe Center for Arts & Media, accepting work. Open to video artists from

around world. Three prizes of DM 30,000. Deadline: May 31. For terms of competition, contact: ZKM Karlsruhe, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Deutscher Videokunstpreis 94, Postfach 6919, D-76049 Karlsruhe, Germany; tel: 07221/ 922133; fax: 07221/922025.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free of charge to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications ($35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. Contact: Mark J. Sindler, exec. director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES Projects in Media grants support planning, writing, or production of TV & radio programs in humanities intended for general audiences. Collaboration of scholars in humanities w/ experienced producers, writer & directors is required. Special funding opportunity for doc film series. Eligible applicants are nonprofit institutions & organizations, incl. public TV & radio stations. Deadline: Sept. 14. Call NEH at (202) 606-8278.

PIFVA SUBSIDY PROGRAM helps Philadelphia Ind. Film/Video Assoc. members complete works. Priority is to support completion of work, although grants considered towards work at earlier stages of prod. Grants paid directly to facilities for specific lab/facility services at discounted rates as negotiated by artist. Grants average $500; maximum: $1,000. Deadline: June 1. PIFVA Subsidy Program, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6594; 6562 (fax).

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA accepting grant appls for thesis film projects by students enrolled in accredited film programs. For more info, write: Pamela Signorella, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021; (212) 744-3221.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WESTERN STATES REGIONAL MEDIA ARTS FELLOWSHIPS assist regional ind. media artists whose work shows exceptional promise & who have demonstrated a commitment to film &/or video art. Grants up to $7,000 are awarded to film/video artists for prod. expenses for proposed new work or works-in-progress. Residents of AL, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY & Pacific territories eligible. Students ineligible. Fellowship program funded by NEA & AFI w/ add'l funding from Oregon Arts Commission & Washington State Arts Commission & administered by Portland Art Museum Northwest Film Center. Official grant appl. must accompany submissions. Deadline: June 10. Contact: WSRMAF, Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; 226-4842 (fax).

WRITERS WORKSHOP, nonprofit organization dedicated to discovery & development of new screenwriters, accepting submissions for WW Special Event, monthly reading by WW Actors Repertory Company before a live audience, w/ prominent film/TV professionals serving as moderators to critique screenplay. Past moderators incl. Oliver Stone, Lawrence Kasdan & Ray Bradbury. For more info, send SASE to: Writers Workshop P.O. Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

Miscellaneous

CAL STATE, NORTHRIDGE's radio-TV-film dept. needs film and video equipment, supplies, books & donations to recover from January's devastating earthquake. Send cash donations to: CSUN Foundation, RTVF dept., CSUN, Northridge, CA 91330. Send equipment, supplies & books to: Radio-TV-Film dept., CSUN, Northridge, CA 91330; (818) 885-3192.

COMMUNITY TV NETWORK seeks video equipment donations. CTVN is community-based nonprofit organization, which provides video training to inner-city youths in Chicago. For more info, call: Julie Brich (312) 278-8500.

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April 12 1pm Ron Kuivila
"Virtual Reality on $5/Day"
Demonstration of interactive installation art projects using real time video digitization & DSP.

May 5 1pm Ayelet Sela,
"Computer Games & Gender"
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Memoranda: continued from p. 56

TEIGET has plans in all states except Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island; sold by Burt Diamond, (212) 758-5656/(800) 886-7504. A third plan is offered directly to members (not an AIVF plan) by Support Services Alliance; call Meyer Braiterman, (718) 965-3505. If you know of an affordable alternative to the plans we are offering, please call AIVF Membership Programs director Pamela Calvert at (212) 473-3400.

Additional dental insurance note: We have been misinforming members that the dental insurance is no longer being offered. It is! Available in NY, NJ, PA, CT & MA. Northeast Dental Plan, (212) 687-4200/(800) 828-2222.

MOST IMPORTANTLY: LOBBY FOR NATIONAL HEALTH CARE NOW!

DISCOUNT UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that MERCER STREET SOUND will offer AIVF members a *50% discount* off the corporate book rate on their audio postproduction services. They are at 133 Mercer Street, New York City; the contact person is Bill Seery, (212) 966-6794.

We are very interested in expanding the trade discount program, especially with businesses outside NYC. Call us if you have a business or service that you can offer to fellow members at a discount. Also, call us if you do a lot of business with someone who might be a good prospect for us to approach; they should offer consistently good service at a competitive price, and it helps if you can give us a contact person to talk to. Call Membership Programs Director Pamela Calvert (212) 473-3400.

ON-LINE UPDATE

We can only report more frustrating delays from America Online, and must say that this bodes ill for a longterm relationship with this service provider. Members who are Internet whizzes (this decidedly does not describe the AIVF staff) should be thinking about alternatives for how we can get online with minimum muss, fuss, and bother, and maximum accessibility and flexibility. We want, for example, to be able not only to host BBSs, but to teleconference, "live-chat," and provide information services such as membership list online. Other avenues ("on-ramps"?) will open up as we get going with the technology.

Back to AOL: Once they give us the go-ahead, we will announce our permanent keyword online in Abbate Video's bulletin board, where members have been having a spirited dialogue since January. If you are new to AIVF or AOL: once you are on-line, pull down "GO TO" from the menu at the top of the screen, and select **keyword**. At the prompt, type **abbate**, then selected **message center**, then **topics**, and finally select the **aivf** option. To subscribe to AOL, call (800) 827-6364.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the members of AIVF and the following organizations:

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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ACS Network Productions, Washington, DC; Alternate Current, New York, NY; American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; American Film Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Ann Arbor Community Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; The Asia Society, New York, NY; Assemblage, New York, NY; Athens Center for Film & Video, Athens, OH; Bennu Productions, Yonkers, NY; Benton Foundation, Washington, DC; Black Planet Productions, New York, NY; Blackside, Boston, MA; Breckenridge Festival of Film, Breckenridge, CO; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Productions, New York, NY; Center for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Center for New Media, New York, NY; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; Cituma LTDA Film and Video Productions, Bogota, Columbia; Coe Film Associates, New York, NY; Colelli Productions, Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Columbus Community Cable Acess, Columbus, OH; Command Communications, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, New York, NY; MHCC Communication Arts, Gresham, OR; Community Television Network, Chicago, IL; Cunnigham Dance Foundation, New York, NY; Denver International Film Society, Denver, CO; State University of New York-Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; Duke University, Durham, NC; Eclipse Communications, Springfield, MA; Educational Video Center, New York, NY; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Eximus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fallout Shelter Productions, Mansfield, OH; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Films by Edmund Levy, New York, NY; First Run Features, New York, NY; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Center, Atlanta, GA; Imagination Children's TV, Mansfield Center, CT; International Cultural Programming, New York, NY; Intermedia Arts Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; International Audiochrome, Rye, NY; International Film Seminars, New York, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Productions, Boulder, CO; Missoula Community Access, Missoula MT; NAATA, San Francisco, CA; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; KCET National Latino Community Center, Los Angeles, CA; National Center for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; National Video Resources, New York, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., New York, NY; New Image Productions, Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, PA; 911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; One Eighty One Productions, New York, NY; Outside in July, New York, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, New York, NY; Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Promontory Point Films, Albany, NY; University of Nebrska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE; Ross-Gafney, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA; Southwest alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; Sundance Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Terrace Films, Brooklyn, NY; Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; University of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; UCLA Film and TV Archive, Los angeles, CA; University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; USA Film Festival, Dallas, TX; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, British Columbia; School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; West Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; Women Make Movies, New York, NY; Zeitgeist Film, Tampa, FL

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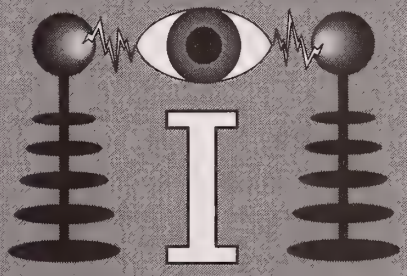
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AIVF'S

20th Anniversary Celebration

June kicks off our 20th Anniversary Celebration—a full year of special events commemorating the last two decades of independent media and AIVF's role in this vital community. We'll be announcing events and programs on this page in the months to come, so be sure to turn to it first when your magazine arrives! For the first event, the New York State Council on the Arts and AIVF will salute one another in an evening of film and video screenings at Lincoln Center. This even closes NYSCA's week-long celebration of 30 years in the field.



SET IN MOTION: 30 YEARS OF NYSCA SUPPORT OF INDEPENDENTS

When: Thursday, June 9th
6:15 pm Video Program:
Tales of War & Peace:
Smothering Dreams (Dan Reeves)
Belchite/South Bronx (Francesco Torres)
History and Memory (Rea Tajiri)
Trouble I've Seen (Phil Mallory Jones)
In the Seed (Veronica Soul/WNYC Poetry Spots)
8:00 pm Reception
9:00 pm Film Program:
Far from Poland (Jill Godmilow)

Where: Walter Reade Theater, Lincoln Center
Price: $5 AIVF & Film Society Members*/$7 Others

*AIVF Members may attend all **Set in Motion** screenings at the discounted price. The series runs June 3-9. Call the Lincoln Center Film Society for full program (212) 875-5610.

FORUMS

NATIVE AMERICAN FILM NOW

Presented in association with the Wind and Glacier Voices Film Festival

Hollywood, TV, and film festivals are all focused on Native American content. But has the wave provided more opportunities for Native American *filmmakers*? Who holds the purse strings, and what are they looking for? What is the substance behind the new cachet? Filmmakers and industry reps will discuss the current prospects and options in production, financing, distribution, and exhibition.

When: Saturday, May 7, 3:30 pm
Where: Kaplan Penthouse (above Walter Reade Theater), Lincoln Center
Price: $2 with festival ticket stub; $5 others
Festival dates: May 3-7; call (212) 226-7171 for program information.

Special thanks to AIVF member James McGowan for his assistance in organizing this event.

FUNDING FOR GAY & LESBIAN MEDIA

Presented in association with the New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival

Where is the money for the "new queer cinema," who are the gatekeepers, and how do independents get access? Funders and filmmakers will discuss the opportunities, moderated by Terry Lawler, director of development and production, Women Make Movies.

When: Saturday, May 21, 1:00 pm
Where: tba; call festival for update.
Price: Free
Festival dates: May 12-22; call (212) 343-2707 for program information.

THE FILMMAKER/COMPOSER PARTNERSHIP

Finding and commissioning a composer to create an original film score can be a challenging experience. AIVF and Meet the Composer are initiating a range of programs to facilitate the process, beginning with a panel event moderated by *The Independent* editor Patricia Thomson. Filmmakers and composers will discuss the collaborative process and how to make it work smoothly. This event is cosponsored by the New School for Social Research.

When: Monday, May 23, 6:30 pm
Where: Tishman Auditorium, the New School, 66 W. 12 St., NYC
Price: Free

MEET AND GREET

These are opportunities for AIVF members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, and to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only; limited to 20 participants; RSVP required.*

Susan Glatzer
Director, Semi-Theatrical Sales,
First Run Features
Thursday, May 19, 6:00 pm

MONTHLY MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices to learn about the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the resource library. RSVP appreciated.

When: Monday, May 16, at 6:00 pm
Where: AIVF offices

"MEET YOUR (FELLOW) MAKER" A MONTHLY MEMBER SALON

This is a monthly opportunity for members to meet informally and socialize.

When: The third Tuesday of each month; May 17, 6-8 pm (Drinks half-price for the first hour).
Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 Second Avenue (9th St.)

Organized by AIVF member Jonathan Berman, maker of *The Shvitz*. (Make it a regular date: plan ahead for Tuesday evening, June 21!)

COMING IN JUNE:

MARK LITWAK WORKSHOP SELF-DEFENSE FOR WRITERS & FILMMAKERS

In this intensive seminar, filmmakers learn how to anticipate problems before they arise in their negotiations with production and distribution companies and how to create incentives for companies to live up to their agreements. In the event of an unresolvable dispute, participants learn what remedies are available to enforce their rights. Course handouts include 100+ pages of useful contracts, checklists, forms, and materials. Mark Litwak is an entertainment attorney, teacher, and author of *Reel Power: The Struggle for Influence and Success in the New Hollywood* and the soon-to-be-published *Dealmaking in the Film and Television Industry*. Advance registration required.

When: Sat., June 11, 10:00 am - 5:30 pm
Where: Location tba; call office for update
Price: $85 AIVF members; $95 others
For more information: (212) 473-3400

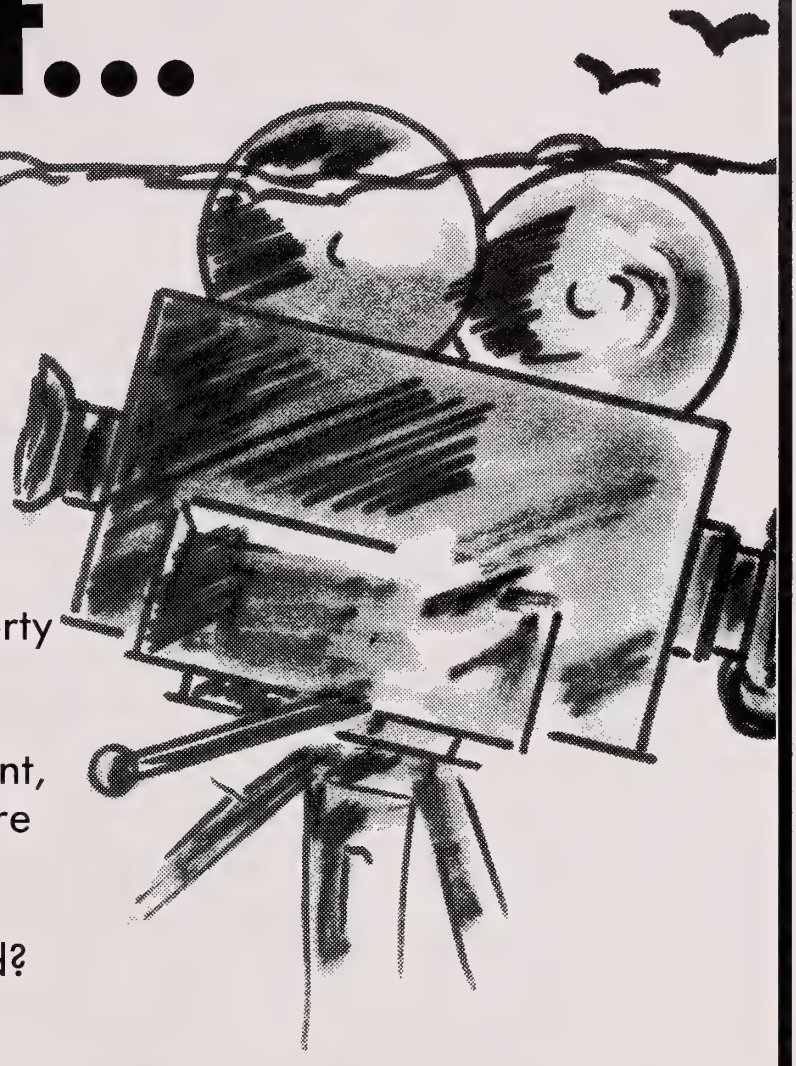
HEALTH INSURANCE NOTES

It's no secret that health insurance is unavailable, unaffordable, and the policies are impossible to understand. Added to this, each of the 50 states has jurisdiction over its own insurance laws, so any given plan will have different benefits and prices in each state, and this information changes all the time. To say the least, it's very difficult for us to stay on top of this, and we apologize for the often confused information you get from our office.

When this issue went to press, the following information was current: The Mutual of Omaha plan is available to members in all states except California and New Jersey; it can be sold by any M of O agent in your state.

Continued on p. 54

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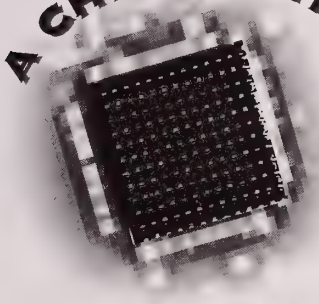
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FILM & VIDEO THE INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

June 1994
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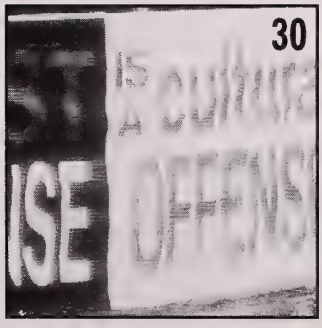
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AIVF CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA







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COMPILED BY PATRICIA THOMSON

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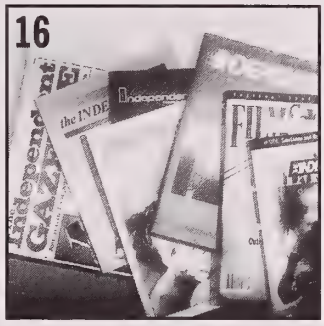
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When the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) was created 20 years ago, independent media had its roots in the political movements of the late sixties and early seventies. Since then, the success of independent features, including Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger Than Paradise* and Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*, have paved the way for a new generation of directors. In an industry that often bucks trends, independents have created some of their own over the last few decades: While the seventies witnessed a boom in film- and videomaking by feminists, the eighties was the decade of video. The nineties aren't even half over, and already gay and lesbian makers have left an indelible mark on the decade.

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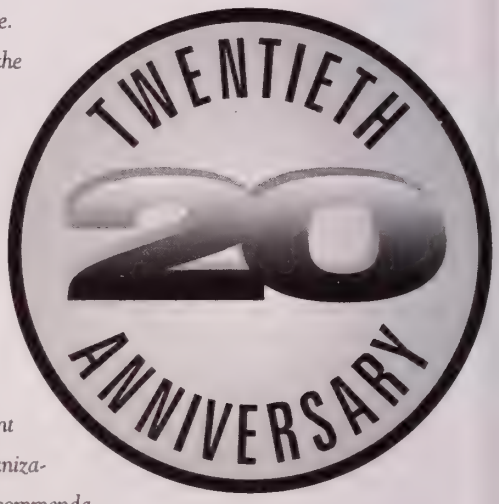
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Dear Reader:

Remember your twentieth birthday? The ambiguous stream of dread and anticipation that spewed forth as you attempted to blow out all the candles? The recognition that you had reached the cusp of adulthood, whether you liked it or not?

The Association of Independent Video- and Filmmakers (AIVF)—the only national service organization devoted to independent media artists—turns 20 this year, and in putting together this special issue of The Independent, *many of us have experienced a similar mixed bag of emotions. AIVF, which began as a grassroots effort by an assortment of very independent Manhattan film and video artists during the early seventies, has since evolved as a national entity with 5,000 members and a long list of successes both in terms of programs and advocacy efforts. As founding member Larry Loewinger and former executive director Lawrence Sapadin recall in their respective articles, "The Fab Formation" and "Adventures in Advocacy," AIVF has proven there is strength in numbers by emerging victorious from numerous battles both on and off Capitol Hill. Such victories are even more trumpet-worthy considering the ongoing struggle for funding dollars that the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), AIVF's nonprofit sister, must endure.*



But lest our backs become sore from patting, the anniversary also makes us realize how much we have yet to accomplish. And with a dearth of new funding outlets, an embattled NEA, and a bare-bones in-house staff, the prospects for rapid growth are bleaker than we would like to imagine.

Some say we should be glad to have four phonelines, electricity, and a few used Macs. But AIVF is not content merely to exist. In a three-year plan we completed in 1993 to receive an NEA advancement grant, we mapped out a short-term vision for the organization and have already followed through on several recommendations, which included hiring a part-time advocacy director to make sure independents are included in the telecommunications policy that will guide us into the next century. We also hired a membership and programs director, who has revitalized AIVF's seminar series, initiated local member get-togethers throughout the country, and beefed up our member discount program. She and FIVF's development director also organized our first successful holiday bash at the Women Make Movies office. Next on their agenda: Two events in celebration of AIVF's twentieth (See the Memoranda section of this issue for details.)

The past two decades have been packed with moments both bitter and sweet for independent makers. In her essay, "Field of Dreams," critic B. Ruby Rich traces the evolution of funding sources, technologies, exhibition venues, and, above all, creative energy.

But what of the future? In this issue, AIVF's executive director Ruby Lerner takes readers on a wild ride to the year 2014, where (you'll be pleased to know) independent media is thriving. She also offers practical steps on how to get from here to there.

Over the years, one of AIVF's major successes has been the spawning of this magazine, which since 1978 has given readers an opportunity to learn about their colleagues' projects, discover employment, exhibition, and funding opportunities, and, above all, realize they are not alone in their efforts to leave indelible impressions on those who view their films and videotapes.

Muchos kudos to all AIVF's members, past and current, staff and board, and the wonderful friends and supporters who've helped bring us to 1994. Here's to the next 20 years!

Michele Shapiro
Guest Editor

Ruby Lerner
Publisher

"Notable Quotes"
FROM THE INDEPENDENT, 1978-1994

COMPILED BY PATRICIA THOMSON

Last night we had a remarkable screening. Over 250 people came to the New York premiere of Martha Coolidge's new film, Not a Pretty Picture.

LETTER FROM AIVF FOUNDER ED LYNCH TO THE ORGANIZATION'S MEMBERS, NOVEMBER 1975

ABC, NBC, and CBS responded formally to the antitrust charges, which were filed against them last September [by a group of 26 independents]. This suit, alleging restraint of trade and monopolization of news and public affairs programming on U.S. television, is essentially an attempt to break the pernicious and long-standing network "policy" of refusing to deal with independent producers.
JOEL LEVITCH, MAY 1979

"I don't know if we should give Oscars to those people who come from nowhere. We don't know them... What are short subjects and documentaries, and what do they have to do with the movie business?"
HOWARD KOCH, PRODUCER, MAY 1980

"Back in 1969, just when portable video equipment was becoming available in stores, I met some people...called the Videofreex. It was terrific. We set up a loft in SoHo in the late sixties and early seventies as a video studio and did everything we could think of on tape. We never stopped to think about why we were doing it or whether there was any money in it. That was back in '69. Of course, some people have made millions thinking about whether there was money in it in the years since then."
SKIP BLUMBERG, FILMMAKER, MARCH 1981

This spring's crop of controversies centers on the content of social documentaries. The contentious topics range from cussing and interracial dating in Peter Davis' Seventeen episode of Middletown; to the U.S. arming of King Hassan's Moroccan troops in a war against the Polisario Liberation Movement of the Western Sahara in Sharon Sopher's Blood and Sand; to life after Somoza in Helena Solberg-Ladd's Nicaragua: From the Ashes.
KATHLEEN HULSER, JULY/AUGUST 1982

The man who has repeatedly promised to depoliticize the National Endowment for the Humanities has single-handedly awarded $30,000 to a professional anti-Communist lobbying group called Accuracy in Media for production of a film correcting alleged "distortions" in the recent PBS series Vietnam: A Television History. With this grant, NEH chairman William J. Bennett has exposed...the hollowness of his insistent claims that political partisanship is anathema to NEH projects.
SUSAN LINFIELD, SEPTEMBER 1984

Last fall the CIA sent a purchase order to Icarus Films for approximately one dozen films and videotapes... Most are documentaries critical of US foreign policy—and CIA involvement in Central America.... Are these independent works becoming a source for intelligence gathering by the very agencies they criticize?
RENEE TAJIMA, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1985

As home video's growth continues to outstrip even the most optimistic predictions of the marketing wizards, classic avant-garde titles familiar to a generation of cinema students are now being made available to a wider public courtesy of the cassette revolution.
DEBRA GOLDMAN, MAY 1986

The San Francisco-based Independent Documentary Group is considering a lawsuit against PBS after it reneged on an offer to air IDG's film Dark Circle...(which) documents the effects of the nuclear industry on workers, communities around the plants, and atomic veterans.
RENEE TAJIMA & DEBRA GOLDMAN, AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1986

There's trouble in paradise. When the contracts for [the Learning Channel's series] Declarations of Independents arrived in the mail, a number of producers were miffed.... "Nobody ever said they would also distribute—for free—our programming to [PBS]," said Stevenson Palphi.
PATRICIA THOMSON, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1987

A responsible work today seems to me above all as one that shows, on the one hand, a political commitment and an ideological lucidity, and is, on the other hand, interrogative by nature, instead of being merely prescriptive. In other words, a work that involves her story in history; a work that acknowledges the difference between lived experience and representation; a work that is careful not to turn a struggle into an object of consumption and requires that responsibility be assumed by the maker as well as by the audience, without whose participation no solution emerges, for no solution exists as a given.
TRINH T. MINH-HA, MAY 1987

One of the shortcomings of commercial television's AIDS coverage lies in its insistence on speaking to one audience—the you addressed is presumed to be white, middle-class, heterosexual, and healthy, grouped in cozy, stable families. Those responsible for these television programs completely ignore the possibility that many of those watching may be struggling with AIDS on a more immediate level.
Timothy Landers, January/February 1988

The First Amendment sometimes leads to strange bedfellows. In Kansas City, local Ku Klux Klan members have found a friend in the American Civil Liberties Union, which has agreed to defend the right of the white supremacist group to use the local public access cable channel.
RENEE TAJIMA, AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1988

Today, we are proposing that CPB be required to fund a National Independent Program Service with an unambiguous mandate: to serve audiences presently neglected by public television and to develop new audiences for innovative programming. These funds would constitute a "risk fund," a broadcast laboratory, a long-overdue research and development department, not just for public television but by example for American broadcasting as a whole.
LAWRENCE SAPADIN, STATEMENT TO THE SENATE COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE, REPRINTED IN JUNE 1988

"This happens every two or three years. NEA and NEH endow some group or artist that members find offensive—the last flap was over pornographic poetry—and there is a routine call for a cut of endowment money. Normally, we can withstand that, and we hope we can this time as well."
REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS DOWNEY, OCTOBER 1989

"No one wants Jesse Helms waving a Mapplethorpe catalogue around on the Senate floor."
AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE ARTS LOBBYIST DEAN AMHAUS, NOVEMBER 1989

"Political discourse ought to be in the political arena and not in a show sponsored by the Endowment."
NEA CHAIR JOHN FROHNMAYER,

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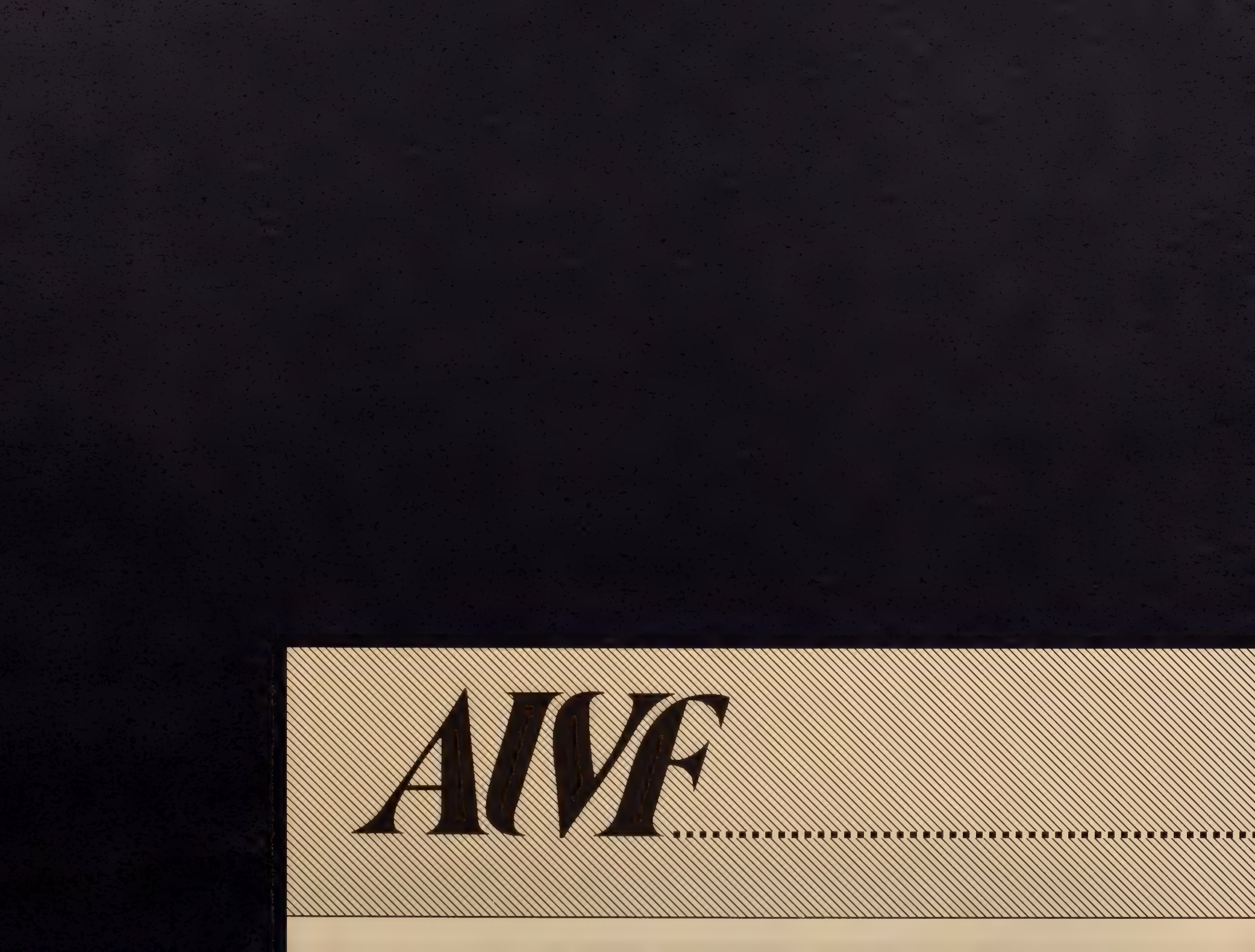
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Do the Right Thing and Roger & Me not only received sharp critical attention from those who object to the political positions represented in them, but both filmmakers faced virtual campaigns against their personal integrity. Indeed, Moore-bashing and Lee-bashing seemed to rise and fall with their box office grosses, much like the fluctuations in the expressions of anti-Japanese opinions in relation to the rise and fall of the US trade deficit.
RENEE TAJIMA, JUNE 1990

"I find in the documentary community an almost knee-jerk desire to create barriers and divisions, to assume that there are enemies out there. There are enemies out there, but they're not as pervasive as we tend to think."
KEN BURNS, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1991

What you wear to a demonstration is as important as the creative and technical elements of a demo documentation. AIDS activists show off their fashion consciousness with a chant frequently shouted at latex-gloved cops who spread AIDSphobia with a tasteless fashion statement implying that AIDS is transmitted by casual contact: "Your gloves don't match your shoes. You'll see it on the news."
ELLEN SPIRO, MAY 1991

Even though everyone anticipated an enthusiastic response to ITVS's first general solicitation, the overwhelming number of applicants has managed to exceed all expectations. A bumper crop of approximately 2,000 applications is now piled high in ITVS's St. Paul office.
TOD LIPPY, JUNE 1991

Tongues Untied was dropped by 19 of the top 50 market stations and rescheduled by numerous others after it was deemed offensive by some affiliated executives and right-wing activist Reverend Donald Wildmon... "People are far more sophisticated in their homophobia and racism now," says Marlon Riggs, "so they say, 'We object to language, we have to protect the community.' Those statements are a ruse." ***CATHERINE SAALFIELD, OCTOBER 1991***

The quiet crisis afflicting the arts is about mounting debt and organizational dysfunction....We observe all arts organizations attempting to function at a level that is 30 to 50 percent above the floor of available human and financial resources. We believe this gap results not only from eroding human and financial resources but from inappropriate growth.
NELLO MCDANIEL AND GEORGE THORN JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1992

"If the National Endowment for the Arts gets picked off, public broadcasting is next, and after that research funds for universities, and after that research funds for science. There will be no end to it."
JOHN FROHNMAYER, FORMER NEA CHAIR, MAY 1992

"Many independents feel public TV should be cable access with funding, with a schedule showcasing single programs."
PBS NATIONAL PROGRAMMING EXECUTIVE JENNIFER LAWSON, NOVEMBER 1992

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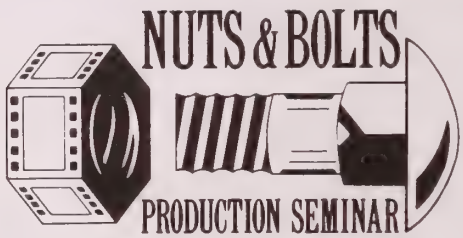
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The Markle Foundation planned to hand PBS $5 million for [1992] election coverage, much of which would have been earmarked for independent productions. But PBS and Markle had a falling out, and the deal was cancelled. Subsequently, the several independents fortunate enough to have their programs aired found themselves grappling with censorship issues.
MICHELE SHAPIRO,
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1993

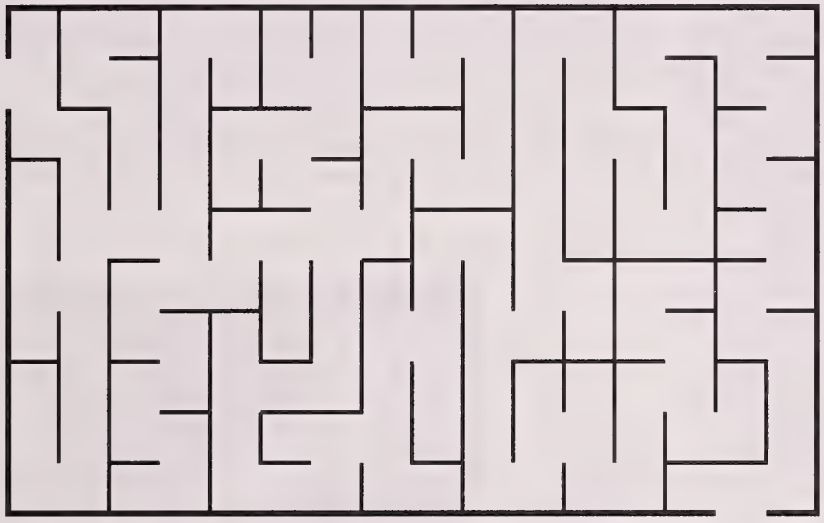
Since 1989, NYSCA has lost 50 percent of its budget. As a result, its staff has been cut by a third, site visits outside New York City are now almost impossible, funding awards have been reduced, and some program categories have been suspended while others, such as film and video production, face alternate year funding.
LUCINDA FURLONG, APRIL 1993

A current joke circulating amongst staffers at WNET is that the station's call letters stand for "We're Not Even Trying." Late in June, the flagship public television station announced it would close its acquisitions division, responsible for programming Independent Focus and coproducing New Television.
BARBARA BLISS OSBORN, OCTOBER 1993

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ALAN DALY, DIRECTOR OF BELL ATLANTIC'S NETWORK SERVICES, JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1994

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THE FABFORMATION (of a Media-Arts Organization)

When sixties communitarianism wed seventies activism, the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers was born. Twenty years later, one founding member looks back at what motivated independent mediamakers to come together, just then, over arts-related issues.

"Nobody thought that filmmakers could agree on anything, let alone an organization."
ED LYNCH, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER AND FIRST PRESIDENT, AIVF.

BY LARRY LOEWINGER



Ed Lynch and Jim Datri sell tickets for AIVF's wildly successful 1978 benefit exhibition, *Independent Cinema Lives!*, which included works by Martha Coolidge, Ed Emshwiller, and Robert Duvall. Courtesy Ed Lynch

NEW YORK teetered on the verge of bankruptcy during the early and mid-seventies. But it was a heroic time for independent film- and videomakers: Film Forum was launched early in the decade; AIVF began a few years later; and, in the late seventies, the Independent Feature Project (IFP) took root. As Film Forum's Karen Cooper recently observed, "The sixties mentality—that the world could be changed and that *we* had the power to change it—spilled over into the new decade and provided film and video artists with a sense of empowerment. Nothing stopped on December 31, 1969,"

Cooper continued, "and nothing started on January 1, 1970. We were living through an evolution." She added that AIVF and other alternative institutions formed at the time were an outgrowth of the civil rights and Vietnam war years. "I don't think any of our lives, our culture, and our creativity can be separated from that context," Cooper said.

Those of us who lived in Manhattan at the time wanted to believe, much like the famous *New Yorker* cartoon map that shows a bloated Manhattan and a shrunken hinterland, the Big Apple was where all of America's contradictory cultural impulses got regurgitated and redefined, if not resolved. One of the raging debates of the era was over media, its nature, its content, and its impact on all of us. Marshall McCluhan's study, *Understanding Media*, was not simply an accidental artifact of the late sixties. It was a seminal book, less for what it said than for the fact it acknowledged the enormous power television held over our lives. It was also no accident that McCluhan was Catholic. Church laity and clergy were at the forefront of this examination of media.

John Culkin, who died recently, was a Catholic priest and director of the Center for Understanding Media, a New York-based organization exploring the impact of media on society. Some thought the tall, lanky Culkin was a basketball player in priest's garb. But he was both a visionary and a consummate fundraiser whose ample contacts throughout the film and video world were themselves a legend. Among the activities of his Center was the disbursement of NEA grants to film- and videomakers who taught in the public schools. As an American Film Institute (AFI) board member, Culkin became disenchanted early on with the Institute's profligate waste, its lack of interest in media education, and its Hollywood orientation. In 1973, he was looking to form an alternative organization. Culkin managed to get a Department of Education grant, which was originally intended for retraining people in poverty pockets. In the autumn of 1973 Culkin had seed money but no organizer for the would-be organization.

Enter Ed Lynch. The son of a West Virginia preacher, Lynch had migrated from Pittsburgh to New York to work as a camera person. (Among his camera credits, interestingly enough, is *Marjoe*, the story of a flamboyant preacher.) Lynch had a way with words and a way of bringing people together. Amalie Rothschild, a founding AIVF board member, once aptly described his operating style as "evangelical."

When early members of AIVF talk about the seventies in New York, the recurring theme is their isolation from one another and from the larger worlds of production and funding in Los Angeles and Washington. Phil Messina, a founding board member and filmmaker then and now, recalled that at that time the community was fragmented. "We wanted to do something bigger than just being commercial artists." he said. "We wanted some kind of movement, a way to help each other. We wanted to keep the old vision alive." Steve Gyllenhaal, now a feature director but then an early AIVF activist, echoed the sentiment: "I wanted to be a part of the independent film community. Here's Charlton Heston, here's Hollywood. I wanted to be in a community that was making other kinds of films."

Another founding board member, filmmaker Martha Coolidge, recently talked about the practical steps taken to launch AIVF. "Ed [Lynch] came to my house and said he was asking me and [video artist] Ed Emshwiller to found this organization. We talked in endless meetings," she said. "Gradually we invited more and more people." Inviting Emshwiller in as a founding board member highlights one of the many then-unresolved questions that plagued AIVF: What art form was it meant to represent? Documentaries? Features? Experimental work? Video? One group, several, or all of them? At the outset, the membership was primarily composed of and led by documentarians. But these were documentarians in the gravitational pull of the feature world.

A Fluster of Activity

In the early days there was a steady drumbeat of board and membership meetings, public events, screenings, and workshops. A few of these efforts, such as the creation of workshops for screenwriters and directors, reflected the pull of feature filmmaking, but others simply allowed makers to unleash a great deal of pent-up energy. According to Rothschild, "All a member had to do was take the initiative and organize an event. That's how the programming got started." AIVF's original board initially met once a week and later cut back to once a month. After these meetings, Rothschild continued, "everyone retired to a neighborhood bar where we played pool and we drank. It was marvelous. We really got to know each other." Screenings were held almost as often as members made films. At the end of 1974 a series of screenings organized by AIVF at the Fifth Avenue Cinema, now part of the New School, boasted the title *Independent Cinema Lives!* Blending documentary and dramatic works, it boldly announced the arrival of a new generation of filmmakers. It also adumbrated the path that several of these filmmakers would take to the West Coast.



THE FAB FOUR: (Clockwise, l. to r.) Ed Lynch, Ted Churchill, Tom Lennon, and John Hiller emerge victorious from the printer with the first (and only) issue of the *Independent Gazette* in 1976.
Coutesy Ted Churchill

In its earliest form, AIVF resembled a commune. The organization's first office space on 99 Prince Street in lower Manhattan merely physicalized the structure of the group. There was great activity and little hierarchy. At a summer board meeting in 1976, a filmmaker attended to propose a project. When the board showed interest, the proposer suggested that people working on such projects be paid. The board unanimously laughed, a response that was recorded for posterity in the minutes of the meeting. As counter-culturists from the sixties, board members, including myself, saw money in an ambivalent light: it was both a necessary evil and a lubricant to the films and projects we wanted to make. Yet the remainder of the same board meeting was spent deciding how to spend what little money the organization had. Money to run a local, then a regional, and finally a national organization would eventually alter the manner and, ultimately, the goals of AIVF.

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Acting Up

"It was a small yet significant drama played out by a number of those who care passionately—indeed, on occasion, feverishly—about the art of the film in America," the *New York Times* reported in the fall of 1974. The plot swirled around the question of whether or not taxpayers should support the American Film Institute (AFI). The AFI wanted its own line item in the federal budget so that it would be free from the National Endowment for the Arts' watchful eye. It is old news now, but at the time it was a very big deal. The issue put AIVF in a glaring national spotlight and at odds with the Hollywood establishment. It was perceived, as Gyllenhaal observed, "as a David and Goliath battle," which ended happily for independents.

Through AIVF, members of the New York film community created a coalition of organizations, a massive letter writing campaign, and an intense lobbying effort in Washington that would ultimately lead to the defeat of the bill the AFI so dearly wanted. There were other battles—over copyright and authorship, and a continuing debate over the deployment of public television monies—that would have more of a lasting impact on the film and video community [See "Adventures in Advocacy," p. 30], but the fight against the AFI was the first, and it was a defining moment for AIVF. The organization's success was fueled by a great and willing reservoir of volunteer labor. It clearly couldn't be tapped forever.

In just a few years the organization would grow from a local, participatory group of a few hundred members to a national organization of several thousand. It would migrate from the Tribeca loft of its founding president, Ed Lynch, to 99 Prince Street, and eventually to its present home at 625 Broadway. As the organization uneasily shed its sixties communitarian ethos for the more enduring work of advocacy politics, it became a permanent fixture of the national independent film and video scene.

To Fund or Not to Fund

Along with the advocacy efforts, the formation of the Independent Creative Artists and Producers (ICAP as it was popularly known) was one of AIVF's first successes. Charles Levine, one of the few experimental filmmakers active in AIVF, saw early on the possibilities of a multi-channel cable environment for filmmakers. Filmmaker and marketer Kitty Morgan and *P.O.V* co-executive producer Marc Weiss, both board members in 1976, gave practical shape to Levine's ideas. The first deal they struck was with Home Box Office, which was looking for short films to fill out their two- to three-hour feature time slots. "I'll never forget the contract we cut with them," Weiss confessed recently: "They would pay us $1 per minute



CAN YOU NAME THE AIVF MEMBERS?: Film- and videomakers took time off to socialize during a Halloween party at Ed Lynch's loft, where AIVF's earliest meetings were held.
Courtesy Ed Lynch

per 100,000 subscribers. Initially, if they were to show a 10-minute film they would pay us $10. If they had a million subscribers they would pay us $100. Because their subscriber base expanded so rapidly, they were paying us hundreds of dollars per minute. We were getting checks for several thousand dollars for an eight minute film. Once they figured out what was going on, they never renewed the contract."

Of the three building blocks that gave AIVF life and structure—the early advocacy efforts, ICAP, and, in 1975, the incorporation of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), which could dispense funds and receive grants—it was the last that seemed the most innocent and which brought about the most immediate changes. Ed Lynch saw growth in terms of the organization's ability to attract production funds, which could then be dispensed to the filmmaking community through FIVF. The board, which didn't want to be in the position of having to choose one project over another, initially resisted Lynch's attempts to secure production funds. When, for instance, soon after the American Film Institute's defeat at the hands of AIVF, the AFI quietly approached FIVF with an offer to administer its independent filmmaker program, the board flatly refused. About a year later, in 1976, the Ford Foundation and the NEA announced a $500,000 fund for documentary programs intended for public television. Lynch wanted this money to be earmarked for FIVF and the independent film and video community. When interviewed for the tenth anniversary of AIVF, Lynch said he "wanted to broker that money for a new relationship between independents and [public television] stations." Again the board resisted. Ultimately it yielded, but the damage had been done; the television fund monies went to WNET. At the time I, like most board members, thought Lynch was wrong in wanting to dispense production funds. It would have required a great deal of political skill to insulate granting panels from the everyday pressures of running an organization. With the comfortable vision of hindsight I can only wonder what AIVF and FIVF would be like today. Would it have made ITVS unnecessary?

By the time Lynch decided to step down as president in 1977, the talents of the founder/organizer were at odds with the needs of the organization. Lynch's departing missive, included in one of the letters he sent periodically to AIVF members, intimated a gentle passing of the sceptor to new president documentarian Ting Barrow: "A new line to the eye of an old woman, a new wrinkle in a vaudeville act, a new fold for the diapers, a furrow across the farm, and a new President of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers."

In the four years between 1973 and 1977, several founding board members, who were moving on to the feature world, followed in Lynch's footsteps, either by stepping down from leadership roles, leaving the organization, or abandoning New York City. With the departures of the early board members, there was little in the way of a permanent structure for the organization. That was left to the next generation.

The transition that followed—from a president- and board-led local entity with an active membership to a national executive-directed operation with a largely passive national membership—was sometimes smooth, more often brutal, but always interesting. In sheer numbers membership increased dramatically, but few new members attended meetings. With the exception of Marc Weiss, the founding board members had all departed by 1980.

Organizing the Organization

Three things changed AIVF as rapidly and profoundly as anything Ed Lynch and the founding board had done: the painful Ting Barrow presidency, the government-sponsored CETA program, and the money from the NEA-funded Short Film Showcase (which created some administrative stability).

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The Evolution of a Revolutionary Magazine

The first and only issue of the *Independent Gazette*, published in July 1976, appears a somewhat unglamorous predecessor to today's glossy-covered *The Independent Film & Video Monthly*. Yet the tabloid newsletter reveals that there existed then, as now, a drive towards artistic and intellectual discourse, underscored by an unbreakable tenet of service to the independent media community. Filmmaker Ted Churchill, who edited the issue, addressed the link between the publication and its readers in his Editor's Note: "As independent artists we speak individually through our work. Collectively we speak through our community and this newspaper."

In its early years, AIVF was struggling with the question of how to bring together a disparate national community of alternative artists who shared the need for resources, connections, screening venues, and support. A publication that would replace the organization's modest mimeographed newsletter seemed the logical solution. But board members felt it had to be more than just a listing of events and organizational news. In 1975, member Tom McDonough proposed a publication called *Deep Truth*, which would serve as "a personal and political thing" as well as "a film-and-video thing." The following year, AIVF received a $4,000 grant and launched *The Independent Gazette*, filled with interviews, reviews, and an account of the first Indie Awards banquet.

Although a second issue was never published, the characteristics McDonough had proposed would come to fruition two years later with the birth of the 12-page magazine, *The Independent*—complete with logo and photographic cover image. Ardele Lister, an FIVF staff member at the time, had conceived of the magazine as a cost-effective alternative to the bulky, mimeographed newsletter AIVF was sending to members and she took responsibility for editing the first few issues. Executive director Alan Jacobs then brought Bill Jones on board as a freelance editor, designer, and layout person. Jones, who with Lister had co-edited the Canadian art magazine, *Criteria*, worked on *The Independent* until 1981.

Writers featured in the early issues included Dee Dee Halleck, Robert Haller, Lillian Jimenez, and Gayla Jamison. Regional production was a focus as were new technologies and how they would be utilized by independents. Notices, festival listings, and classifieds, introduced early on, remain a vital function of the magazine today. "What I believe is most valuable about those early issues," says Lister, "is they are an historical record of art and political issues as well as technical developments.... They provide an incredible resource to students doing research and young independents in a community for which there are far too few books and magazines available."



After Lawrence Sapadin signed on as AIVF's executive director, he made the editorship a permanent staff position and recruited Kathleen Hulser in 1982. The time was right, since funding was relatively heavy and alternative publications were beginning to blossom. Yet the magazine's constant criticism of public television worried early board members, who feared AIVF might appear too obsessed, and too anti-public TV.

When Martha Gever—lured away from her editorship at *Afterimage*—took over for Hulser in 1984, she and two part-time associate editors shared a deep sense of responsibility to the field and a heavy workload. They struggled to increase both the size of the magazine and advertising revenues, and introduced a major redesign.

Gever's presence also signaled a shift in editorial focus. "I introduced the possibility of critical thinking," Gever recalls. "It was a difficult thing. People didn't think of *The Independent* that way. The ideal was to bring [the practical and the political] together in the same realm." It was a controversial move, since many readers and board members envisioned their magazine as more utilitarian, less cerebral. When Gever took over as AIVF's executive director in 1991, Patricia Thomson, the magazine's managing editor since 1987, stepped into her spot and she, too, grappled with *The Independent*'s identity issue.

"Throughout, there's been the debate over whether it should be a magazine for the field or a newsletter for the organization," Thomson says. "But almost everyone agrees it has to be both." In addition to spicing up its content, Thomson and her current staff have worked to increase the publication's visibility in retail stores and on newsstands. *The Independent* now has two major national distributors plus 11 smaller ones (including media arts centers) targeting individual cities or regions. Since 1987 *The Independent*'s retail draw has increased 367 percent.

This growth parallels that of the magazine itself, which now averages 64 pages, compared to 49 in 1991 and 41 just a decade ago. Another growth spurt may lie ahead, the result of the magazine's latest redesign, which debuted in January 1994. Thomson, the magazine's current publisher Ruby Lerner, and managing editor Michele Shapiro believed *The Independent*'s new look should be as bold as the field it covers. The redesign—the first major one in seven years—"was long overdue," says Thomson. "We wanted the magazine to reflect the increased prominence and professionalization of the field, and to give grassroots video, experimental work, documentaries, and so on, the same caché as feature filmmaking, which dominates other magazines." In the same vein, *The Independent* is now putting greater emphasis on regional production, spotlighting various parts of the country twice a year.

Despite its new look, the magazine remains a lifeline for independents based in areas where makers have little or no opportunity to network. Chris Hegedus, co-director with her husband D.A. Pennebaker of the Oscar-nominated documentary, *The War Room*, points out that even for those who live in artistic centers such as New York and L.A., the magazine provides some much-needed support. "There was more of a community back in the seventies when there was more funding," says Hegedus. "When money got tighter, it was more difficult to feel a part of a community, and magazines like *The Independent* became the center"

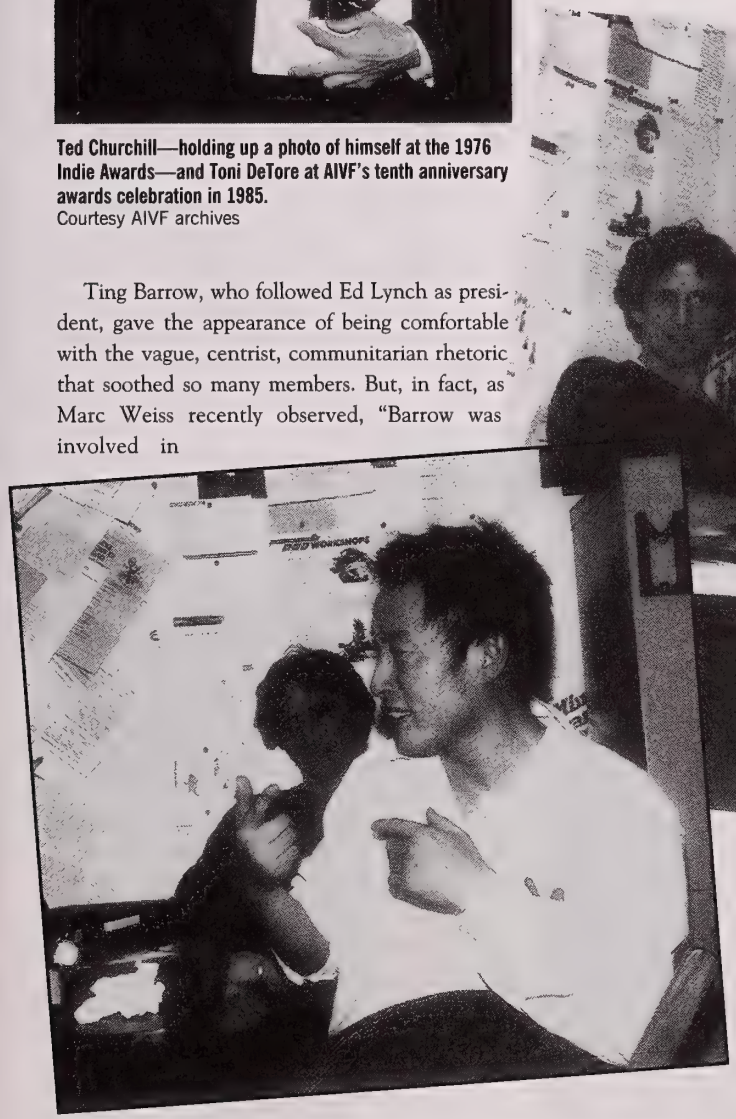
SUE MURRAY

Sue Murray is the editorial assistant for The Independent.



Ted Churchill—holding up a photo of himself at the 1976 Indie Awards—and Toni DeTore at AIVF's tenth anniversary awards celebration in 1985.
Courtesy AIVF archives

Ting Barrow, who followed Ed Lynch as president, gave the appearance of being comfortable with the vague, centrist, communitarian rhetoric that soothed so many members. But, in fact, as Marc Weiss recently observed, "Barrow was involved in the production of a lot of [left wing] political films. He gave hours and hours of his time. He was totally committed to this work." It was all the more surprising then when Barrow agreed to work on a film for the South African government promoting business in that country. A letter to the editor appeared in a very early edition of *The Independent* demanding his resignation. The bitter controversy that ensued put in high relief the question: What was AIVF—a trade association whose members were free to do what they chose, or a political institution whose membership was conditioned on allegiance to a set of clear cut principles? Since it was really both, although headed much more in the direction of a trade association than a political party, the answer was fudged. Barrow left AIVF in 1979, and eventually changed careers. The practical result of his kamikaze ride was to reduce the power of the board presidency. But that alone would not have brought about as rapid a transformation as did the money from the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA).



Video artists, including Dara Birnbaum, Tom Bowes, and Nam June Paik, participated in a 1982 FIVF Symposium, "TV Guides."
Photos: Sol Rubin

CETA made AIVF grow up. First administered in 1977, the CETA program earmarked federal monies to local governments to provide jobs for the unemployed. In New York City a certain amount was designated for the arts and a portion of that found its way to FIVF. CETA meant that the organization had to award individuals money to work for local community groups or pursue individual projects, something the founding board had refused to do. (FIVF offered yearly salaries of $10,000 to 14 media artists selected from more than 300 applicants in 1977.) The CETA program also forced AIVF to acquire the administrative skills necessary for handling large sums of money. Mostly, it raised serious questions about the racial, class, ethnic, and gender makeup of AIVF leader-



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ship and, to a lesser extent, membership. According to former board chair Lillian Jimenez, "CETA allowed media workers to come in contact with community groups and institutions that heretofore it had not been involved with. It also allowed for a different level of organizing and advocacy work." Jimenez added that Bill Jones was hired with CETA money to edit early issues of *The Independent*.

The Short Film Showcase, conceived by the NEA as a means of cultivating an audience for short films, required an additional full-time staffer. The NEA provided $100,000-plus in support money to carry out the project, which involved enlarging a group of selected shorts from 16mm to 35mm and distributing them to theatrical exhibitors free of charge. The filmmakers also received an honorarium.

By 1980 AIVF was an organization transformed. Gone were the heroic days of meetings, screenings, workshops, and membership activity. They had been replaced by an office staff, an executive director, and a magazine that has since become the focal point of AIVF activity.

Some of the inspiration and creative energy that had been so wonderful to both witness and participate in during the organization's formation stage had been lost. Lynch suggested it was probably inevitable that, when choosing between career and voluntary service to the community, people would eventually opt to take care of their own needs. "Fundamentally," he concluded, "people matured out of the organization. It was a perfectly natural change."

The first four years of AIVF were filled with moments of extraordinary possibility. Some possibilities, like the funding of independent films and video, never materialized. Others, like the CETA program and the Short Film Showcase, influenced the development of the organization, but vanished as government money dried up. But the very first disputes, both with the AFI and over copyright issues, were the benchmarks for AIVF's future advocacy efforts. Out of the efforts has evolved a larger, more structured institution with an in-house library, a festival bureau, and its own mouthpiece, *The Independent*. Some things, however, do remain the same: Members today, as in years past, gain a certain comfort in knowing they are not alone in their struggle as independents.

Larry Loewinger is a sound recordist, journalist, and sometime producer. He was an early AIVF board member and treasurer.

In writing this piece, the author was aided by Marc Weiss' informal, but extensive library of AIVF memorabilia, and by Debra Goldman's comprehensive article on the 10th anniversary of AIVF's founding. For a copy of AIVF's tenth anniversary issue, send $5 (incl. postage & handling) to: Back Issues, *The Independent*, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.

ProFiles

Where are they now? AIVF traces the steps of its founders.

The word recurs, tempered by years of experience and sung like a refrain: *COMMUNITY.* Recognizing the truth behind the old adage that there is strength in numbers, the seven members of AIVF's first board of directors—convened in 1974—and, a few years

later, the organization's first executive director sought a unified presence for film and videomakers. Now, whether or not film and video have remained at the center of their lives and work, they summon that same anarchistic intensity when recalling the countless unpaid hours spent fighting for their peers and shaping the future of independent media.

"I wanted a community," says AIVF godfather Ed Lynch. "I didn't want to be independent in my daily life; I wanted to make independent films."

Martha Coolidge, the organization's first board chair, attributes her awareness of community to AIVF. "I worked mostly by myself, raising money in preproduction and in postproduction," says the director, who has gone on to receive acclaim in Hollywood for features including *Rambling Rose*, *Lost in Yonkers*, and *Angie*. "I went from that to working within a community, using [its] resources, understanding that as a community we have power."

The notion of a community of independents, birthed in the spirit of the late sixties and early seventies, remains vital despite the dissipation of that community in the ensuing years. On the following pages, *The Independent* catches up with several of AIVF's founders and its premiere executive director, Alan Jacobs, and learns where the past decade has taken them.

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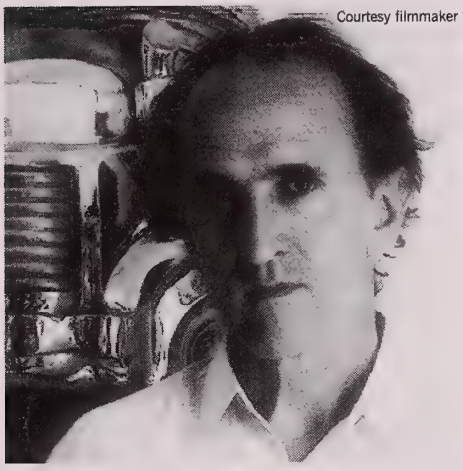
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ed lynch
SCULPTOR & SCREENWRITER

AIVF's founder & president, 1974-77

BY MITCH ALBERT

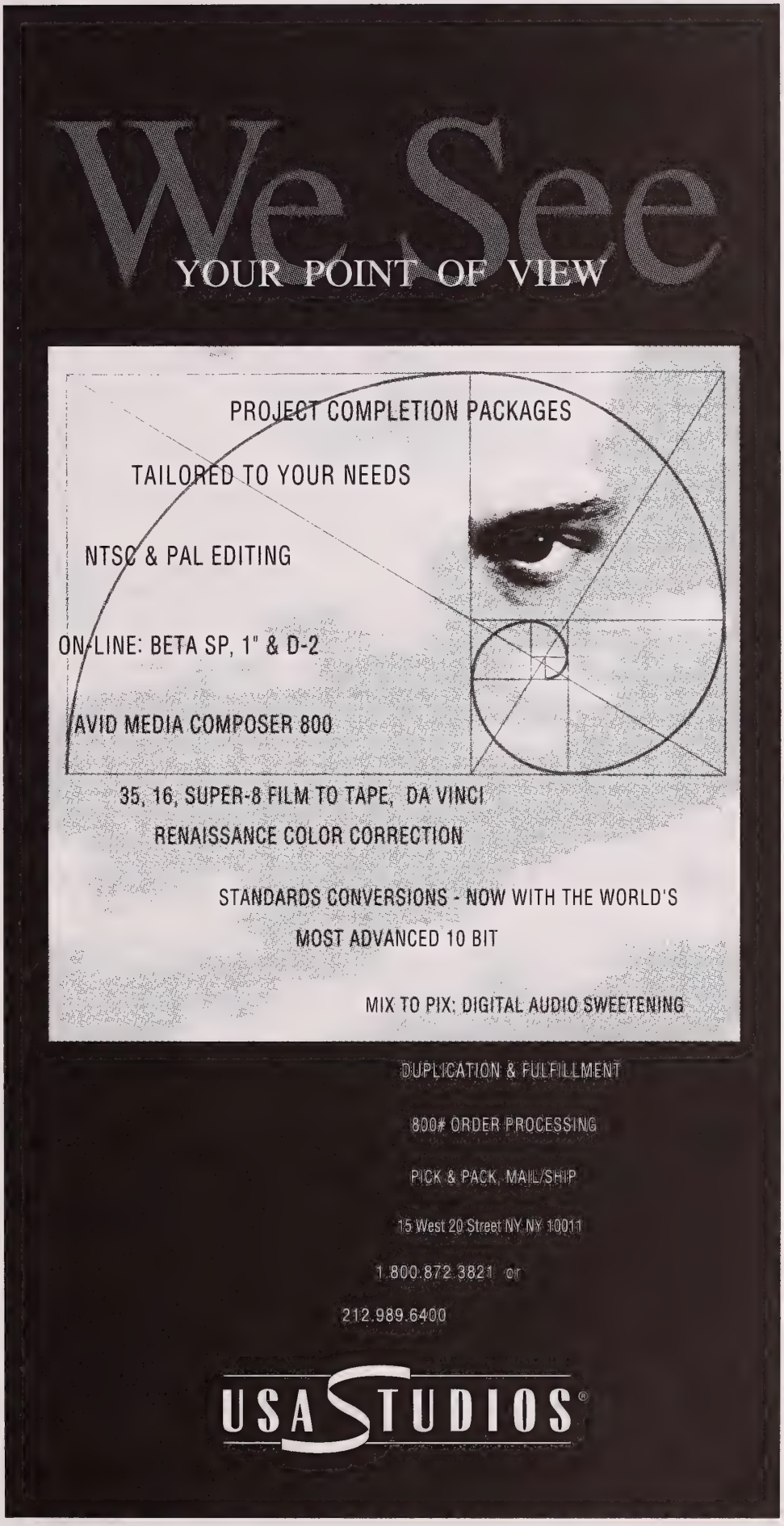


Courtesy filmmaker

ED LYNCH MAKES HIS LIVING AS A SCULPTOR THESE DAYS, BUT HE IS NO LESS A PART OF THE INDEPENDENT FILM SCENE. IN ADDITION TO WRITING SCREENPLAYS, HE HAS WORKED WITH VETERAN FILMMAKER TED TIMRECK, IN WHOSE FILMS MUCH OF LYNCH'S ARTWORK CAN BE SEEN. HIS BRONZE SCULPTURES, LYNCH SAYS, USE TECHNOLOGICAL FORMS TO RIFF ON THE IDEA THAT PEOPLE "USE TECHNOLOGY AS ARMOR," WHETHER IN CARS, FACTORIES, OR ELSEWHERE. HE IS REPRESENTED BY THE MEISNER GALLERY IN SOHO.

Lynch is unanimously considered by other former board members to be the progenitor of AIVF. "AIVF came out of Ed Lynch's head," says Marc Weiss, co-executive producer of the PBS series, *P.O.V.*, "It was his passion.... He put a tremendous amount of work into the organization, probably sacrificing his own filmmaking in the process."

In 1974, Lynch, who had attended New York University's then-new film school with such luminaries as Martin Scorcese and Richard Pierce, says he felt there was something lacking both at the school and in the city. "There were a lot of ambitious people at NYU," he recalls. "But there was no community." The son of a West Virginia preacher, Lynch, who had received seed money from the Department of Education, spread the word that he was forming an organization for



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media artists. The first public meeting, held at Lynch's lower Manhattan loft, attracted more than 100 individuals. The group soon came to be known as the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF). "There is always a community surrounding great artists," Lynch says. "Whether the Impressionists, or Bergman, or Antonioni. We took the same attitude toward AIVF that we took toward film and video: If it wasn't good enough, we could change it. If the *world* wasn't good enough, we could change it."

Lynch spared no effort to create a far-reaching foundation for independents, at one point even meeting Jack Valenti, then as now head of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), on their behalf. "I went to him and asked, 'What can you do for us?' He was baffled," Lynch recalls. "But he's a great politician, of course. He made me feel like I was in the right place at the right time.... I have a terrible feeling I'm probably just an anecdote for him now."

Being anecdotal in the mouths of the powers that be, however, is by definition the fate of the hardcore independent. Lynch remains true to the outsider credo—with a difference. "Being an independent means to some degree being indigestible," he says. "In the sixties and seventies we were trying to put a sharp stick in the eye of the culture. But now the task is figuring out how to make independents heard; to say what we want to say without being so offensive," he continues.

In 1977, after two major victories—a crusade that convinced Congress not to give the American Film Institute a line item in the National Endowment for the Arts budget and a successful attempt at lobbying Congress with regard to United States copywright laws—Lynch split from AIVF because of philosophical differences. But he bears no ill will. In fact, he wishes his colleagues well. "Any [organization] that survives the nineties is a good idea. Lots of things lasted in the eighties because there was money around. Now, if you're still around, somebody's looking out for you."

Mitch Albert is an intern for The Independent.

robert bordiga
INDEPENDENT PRODUCER & INSTRUCTOR

BY MITCH ALBERT

"IT JUST AMAZING THE WAY IT ALL STARTED," ROBERT BORDIGA MUSES. "A FRIEND OF MINE SAID, 'YOU HAVE TO COME TO THIS MEETING...'"

Bordiga retains an almost guileless glee, as though he's still sitting on a folding chair in Ed Lynch's Leonard Street loft. His reminiscences are less memory than virtual nostalgia.

"It was a mix of suits and jeans," he continues. "There were experimental filmmakers and independent dramatic filmmakers trying to get things going. Ed [Lynch] was the center of the whole effort; he had this way of speaking, this speechmaking ability. And Ed Emshwiller was there smiling benignly over all of us."

Bordiga, 45, now designs and conducts intensive, weekend-long "Nuts and Bolts" film production seminars in both New York and Los Angeles. He has worked since the seventies in several capacities, ranging from producer to production manager, AD to budgeting consultant.

"[AIVF] was a great clubhouse," Bordiga recalls. "You had a couple hundred people there, and there was this feeling that we had the ability to get things done. Probably the biggest success was getting public TV to show our work. A lot of energy was spent doing that."

Bordiga's optimism extends to the present independent scene: according to him, all you need is love, plus a little help from your friends. "People want to be involved in something meaningful," he says. "If individuals have a vision, if they have passion and can express themselves, they become magnets." The money aspect is not as important, he adds, as the effort of doing something worthwhile.

"There are still people like Irwin Young at DuArt helping independents when they can," Bordiga says. "Well-placed enthusiasm is contagious." That sentiment sums up Bordiga's outlook in general. He is even sanguine about the renaissance of the New York film industry: "California is going through hard times. There's lots of unemployment in the business there, plus emotional shocks like the earthquake. New York is on the

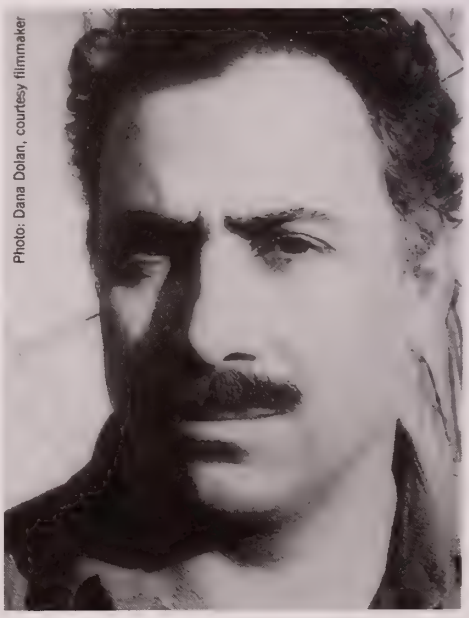


Photo: Dana Dolan, courtesy filmmaker

up, the economy is recovering faster over here."

Bordiga, who has taught filmmaking at New York University, the School of Visual Arts, and the New School for Social Research, says his seminars emphasize what film schools overlook: the realities of film production. "[Film school students] are incredibly uninformed," he says. "They do not know how to delegate or operate with more than five people. They understand cameras, processing, all the technical stuff, but they don't know organization. They're ignorant of unions, guilds, script breakdowns, scheduling concepts. I teach working professionals, and I teach people to be [professionals]."

martha coolidge
FEATURE FILMMAKER

BY B.J. SIGESMUND



Courtesy filmmaker

MARTHA COOLIDGE CAME TO MANHATTAN IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES TO DIRECT HER FIRST PERSONAL PROJECTS. "BEING AN INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER WAS A LONELY EXPERIENCE," SHE RECALLS. "I HAD NO ONE TO TALK TO IF I WAS THINKING OF TRYING SOMETHING; NO ONE TO ASK 'WHAT'S IT LIKE TO APPLY TO THE NEA FOR A GRANT? HOW DO YOU PUT TOGETHER A LIMITED PARTNERSHIP?'"

In her early years as a filmmaker Coolidge made documentaries, which she refers to as "portrait films, films about individuals, about my family. I'm interested in human drama; I still make films about people."

Before leaving the city in 1976 to direct an

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impressive list of more than 15 independent and studio features, including *Real Genius*, *Rambling Rose*, and *Lost in Yonkers*, Coolidge was instrumental in forming AIVF. The experience taught her that "collectively, artists have a voice," she says during a phone conversation from Hollywood, where she is actively promoting her latest feature, *Angie*.

Hers was among the loudest. As the organization's first board chair, she put in around 40 hours a week. When AIVF lobbied in Washington to prevent changes in copyright laws destined to negatively affect the livelihood of many independents, Coolidge realized that "young people, even [those who are] not famous, have enormous power going down and testifying. At some level our Byzantine political system works a little bit."

During her AIVF years, Coolidge remembers brainstorming about an organization for independent features, which eventually evolved into the New York- and L.A.-based Independent Feature Project (IFP). She also recalls recruiting crew members from a highly qualified pool of AIVF members for *Not a Pretty Picture* (1975), her last experimental narrative, which recreated a date rape she experienced in high school.

When Coolidge left Manhattan to make features, the bumpy road took her to Los Angeles, Toronto, and back again. Along the way she collaborated with Francis Ford Coppola and Peter Bogdanovich, and suffered more than her share of disaster, including the loss of a film negative in a plane crash. Her first hit was *Valley Girl* (1983), the sweet, independent film that launched the career of actor Nicholas Cage. That success led to *Real Genius* (1985), *Plain Clothes* (1988), and TV work on *Sledge Hammer!* and *The Twilight Zone*. "I found out while at AIVF that I am a person drawn to community. And Hollywood is definitely a community," she says. Still, it took her a while to adjust to the industry's pecking order. "In New York I was my own person, my own producer. I dictated how I spent every dollar." she recalls. "Here I'm definitely a cog in the giant Hollywood machine. My job is to maintain independent-mindedness, to keep my soul on the material and not on the project size. That's a struggle."

An activist for life after her AIVF experience, Coolidge has since involved herself with groups including Women in Film and the Directors' Guild of America (DGA). She has fought staunchly against colorization and is a vocal proponent of the labeling bill the Directors' Guild is currently ushering through Congress. "[The bill] says that when a consumer is sitting on an airplane, watching television or buying a cassette, he or she deserves to know the movie's been colorized, 25 minutes have been cut, or it's been sped up to fit on the tape," she says vehemently.

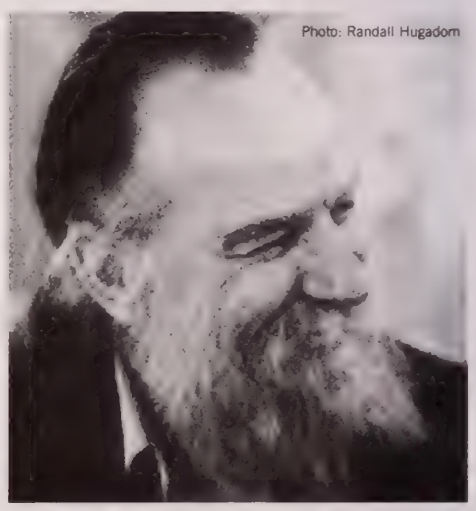
Coolidge has more than one good reason for backing the bill. Her *Joy of Sex* (1984) was so mangled by Paramount she doesn't like to speak about it. Then, with *Rambling Rose*, the crucial bed scene between Laura Dern and Lukas Haas was cut for airplane broadcast. "I went crazy," she says. "If you create a film, even though you were hired, you have your honor and reputation tied in with the work. You are the author, and no one has a right to completely distort it and ruin your reputation." She continues to fight for directors' cuts on all versions of a film.

Her next project could be either an independently produced feature about Johnny Spain, a half-white Black Panther who spent years in prison, or the studio-financed *Boy's Life*, based on the novel by Robert McCammon. Whichever she decides on, it is likely Coolidge's name and voice, trained early, will be clearly heard throughout.

B.J. Sigesmund works for Newsweek's *interactive media department*

ed emshwiller
VIDEO ARTIST
(1925-1990)

BY MORTON SUBOTNIK


Photo: Randall Hugadorn

I HAD KNOWN OF ED, IT SEEMS, FOREVER. WE MET A NUMBER OF TIMES OVER THE YEARS. BUT IT WASN'T UNTIL HE BECAME THE DEAN OF THE FILM SCHOOL AT CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS IN 1979 THAT WE BECAME CLOSE FRIENDS AND BEGAN TO WORK TOGETHER.

Ed's life was devoted to pushing the envelope of video. For years he had been an architect of the medium's electronic vocabulary and had demonstrated his diverse talents with projects including *Thermogenisis* (1972), *Pilobus and Joan* (1973), and *Family Focus* (1975). His impact on the art has proven permanent, and his influence on the young artists who came in contact with him at Cal

Arts will also affect the rest of us. But what I offer here are a few personal thoughts from my work with him over a period of 11 years.

Ed's idea of collaboration was to get together on an ongoing, bi-weekly basis. We would spend the entire evening dining and sharing our work and thoughts. His warmth and easygoing approach to looking and listening made these visits among the most memorable of my life.

Almost a year after our initial meeting, we came up with an idea for a project called *Hungers*, a multimedia opera that finally came into being after two more years. It featured three musicians, a dancer, a singer, and 14 on-stage video monitors. Ed brought a patience and compassion to the work that I don't expect to ever find in another person.

The idea behind *Hungers* was to deal with basic human needs and hungers, such as the mother's need of the child and visa versa. The lead role was to be sung by Joan La Barbara, who was pregnant as we began the work. Ed's way to deal with the imagery was to document her pregnancy all the way through the birth and the early months of feeding. Ed had even talked of filming the birth itself, but because of complications, he did not. The portion in *Hungers* that dealt with all this documentation was seven minutes long, a very beautiful and touching segment and the most challenging I have ever had to score.

While working together, we developed certain images and music that were especially forceful. I tried as best I could to find ways to incorporate them into the work. Ed, however, in his quiet and profound wisdom, said that this work—although it was the strongest thing we had done—was just not right for the project, and that we should set it aside, remember it for another time, and pick it up if and when it is ever appropriate.

Hungers required the development of new hardware and software, and seven people in the pit to help run the show. The end product was both artistically stunning and technologically challenging. To illuminate the dancer's hands for real-time projection, Ed had developed a wireless lighting system that was contained in the dancer's hairband. There were monitors all over the stage with images bouncing from one to the other, two large video projections, and some of the most powerful and touching imagemaking I have ever encountered.

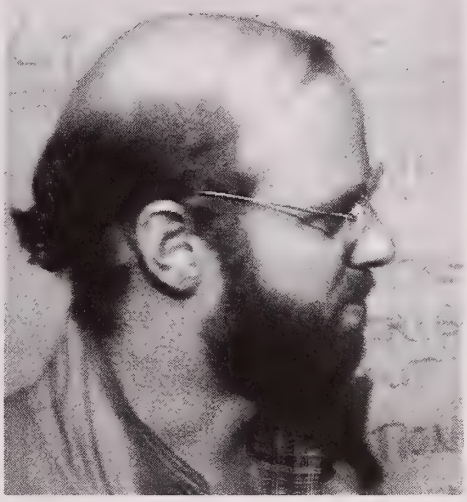
Ed and I decided to collaborate on a second work and had just begun the long planning period when he died. I will never do that work, though I have spent these last years thinking about it. Instead it will live in my memory along with the powerful moments we edited out of *Hungers* and my loving memories of Ed.

Morton Subotnick is a composer living in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He currently teaches a course in composing with interactive media at the California Institute of the Arts.

alan jacobs
FILM & TV PRODUCER

BY MITCH ALBERT

Courtesy AIVF Archives



"THE GREATEST VALUE OF INDEPENDENCE IS A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE," SAYS ALAN JACOBS, AIVF'S FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. "ONE THAT IS SEPARATE FROM THE INDUSTRY, UNDEFINED EXCLUSIVELY BY A COMMERCIAL CONTEXT."

Jacobs, 52, now resides in Los Angeles, where he works as an independent producer of features and TV films. His recent projects include *Running Out* (starring Ellen Burstyn and Walter Matthau) and an adaptation of *The Call of the Wild* (with Ricky Schroeder) for Kraft Foods. "Many people out here consider themselves independent. Castle Rock, for example, or [Robert] Redford. They don't have studio ties.... But independence is too broad a concept; it's hard to define."

From 1964-66 Jacobs attended Columbia University's fledgling film school, then located in "a few dinky rooms above a drugstore on 115th St. and Amsterdam." He later came to view film school in general as "a great deception that decreased the opportunities for actual work." Jacobs says he felt vehemently that students should have been told up front they were not going to vocational school and that there were no job guarantees upon graduating.

He no longer feels that way. "I see [the film school experience] differently now. It's a discipline, a chance to focus yourself and the world around you."

Jacobs started out as a political documentarian. In 1965 he completed his first film, about the



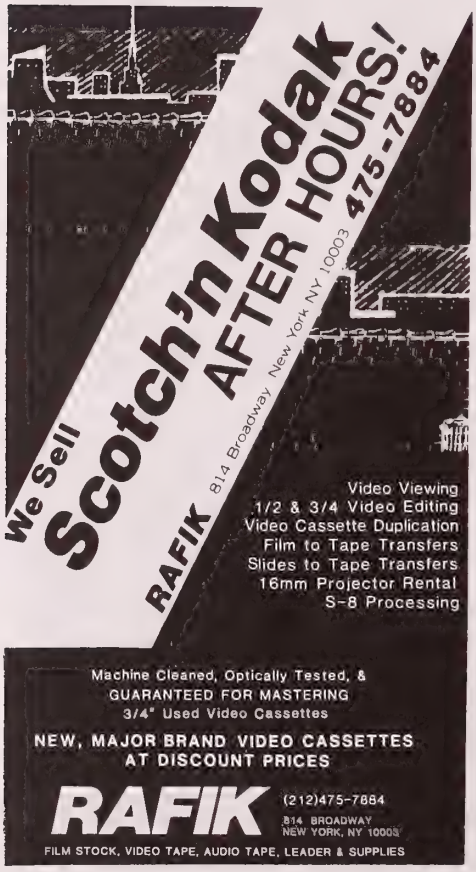
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march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. "I got seriously involved in producing political, social, and controversial films," he says. But the times had a-changed. "In the mid-sixties we had New York Newsreel to facilitate the distribution of documentaries that had difficulties finding [audiences]. It got harder over the years to find financing." Eventually Jacobs formed his own Manhattan-based production company, Odeon Films, with then-partner Eric Breitbart. Odeon disbanded in the mid-eighties, and he has since taken a different tack.

Jacobs' current company, Film Foundry, has a first-look deal with director-producer Sydney Pollack, and he works on fiction film development with playwrights and screenwriters from Minnesota to Louisiana.

For film- and videomakers just starting out, Jacobs has few encouraging words. Funding sources, he points out, are drying up. "In the sixties and seventies there was more money available, through government, foundation, and private grants. It's become a lot tougher to learn skills. You've got to work with the medium first," he continues, "to find out how you're going to grow with it, and that's hard to do today. It's not like painting or writing."

Jacobs became executive director of AIVF in 1978 and served for two years. During this time the organization played a crucial role in helping filmmakers get theirs. "[AIVF] was very important in the seventies and early eighties," Jacobs says, referring to this period when the organization sniffed out the available government funds and obtained them for independents. "The filmmakers had AIVF to represent them in Washington."

Jacobs emphasizes the importance of another of AIVF's roles: disseminator of information. "AIVF today performs most effectively as a resource and information clearinghouse," he observes, "which eliminates every individual producer having to replicate everyone else's experience. New York is an intense community, and information travels fairly well."

phil messina
SCREENWRITER & DIRECTOR

BY MITCH ALBERT

IF "COMMUNITY!" WAS THE BATTLE CRY OF FILMMAKERS IN THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES, TODAY IT IS "MONEY!" EACH OF AIVF'S ORIGINAL BOARD MEMBERS HAS EMPHASIZED CONSTRICTED CASH FLOW AS A SEVERE IMPINGEMENT ON INDEPENDENTS' ABILITIES TO GET THEIR JOBS DONE.

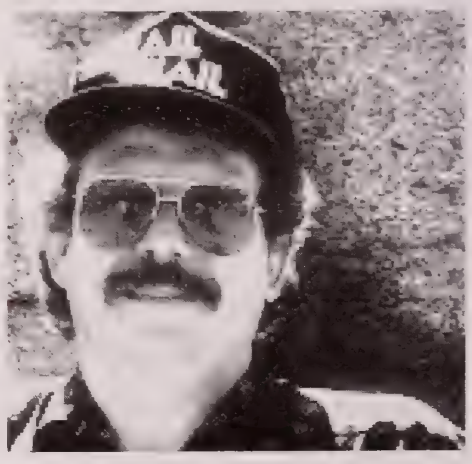
Phil Messina could be the poster child of this new Weltanschauung. "[My generation of independent makers] is jaded because we've been so bludgeoned by the marketplace," he says. "As we get older our demands for money increase, too. And it's hard to raise money [to make independent films]."

Messina, like most of AIVF's originals, began as a documentary maker. He garnered several awards, including a gold medal at the Atlanta Film Festival and a special invitation to Capitol Hill with his 1970 antidrug film *Skezag*. That film, codirected and coproduced with Joel L. Freedman, depicted a day in the life of three hardcore junkies. Messina turned his attention to writing when making films on a regular basis—especially narrative fiction films—appeared out of reach. "It became harder to get actors to commit to projects," he says. "They're insulated by agents, who don't want them to take 'lowball' deals. There are few courageous, innovative people out there."

Moreover, Messina says, power is also concentrated on the West Coast. "Most of my independent friends are out here now," he says. "In the movie industry there is a pull toward [Los Angeles]. The deals are made here, not in New York."

Messina, now 50, moved westward in 1979 and now works as a screenwriter and director. To his credit are numerous commercials, many development deals, projects like the never-completed *Brainstorm* (Natalie Wood's last film), and the odd "network Mafia potboiler" (his words) like *Original Sins* for NBC. Messina's current project is an interracial love story, which he's writing for a Japanese production company.

A long way from his Manhattan days, Messina has not forgotten AIVF. "I'm still committed to the organization's ideals—and they were very idealistic," he says. "Filmmakers would help each other, and that's very important. But film is a medium requiring enormous amounts of money... and you don't raise money through collectives.



Courtesy filmmaker

Charismatic *individuals* raise money."

Messina would like to have seen AIVF acquire a more extensive vision."We had a great support group," he says. "Good hands-on programs and workshops. But we lacked a Joe Papp to raise the money," he concludes. "That's why Sundance and the Independent Feature Project came along."

amalie rothschild
PHOTOGRAPHER & DOCUMENTARIAN

BY MITCH ALBERT



Courtesy Filmmaker

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING MAY NEVER HAVE BEEN EASY, BUT IT SURE WAS A WHOLE LOT EASIER 20 YEARS AGO. JUST ASK AMALIE ROTHSCHILD.

"Everything has changed," says the freelance photographer and documentarian, who has-resided in Rome, Italy for the last four years. "Production costs are 15 to 20 times higher than in the seventies, when you were able to make an hour-long documentary for $20,000. Now you need $500,000 at least," she continues. "The emphasis has changed as well. People are more feature-oriented."

In her photographic work, Rothschild, 48, has specialized in the music field and has covered, among other beats, Woodstock and the Fillmore East. She began directing documentaries in 1969, and has completed nine films since then. Her most recent film, *Painting the Town*, examines the life and work of urban mega-muralist Richard Haas. The hour-long doc premiered in 1990 at both the Sundance Film Festival and the Museum of Modern Art's New Directors series.

Rothschild is an artist's artist. "My films in one way or another have all been about artists, through whom larger issues can be explored," she

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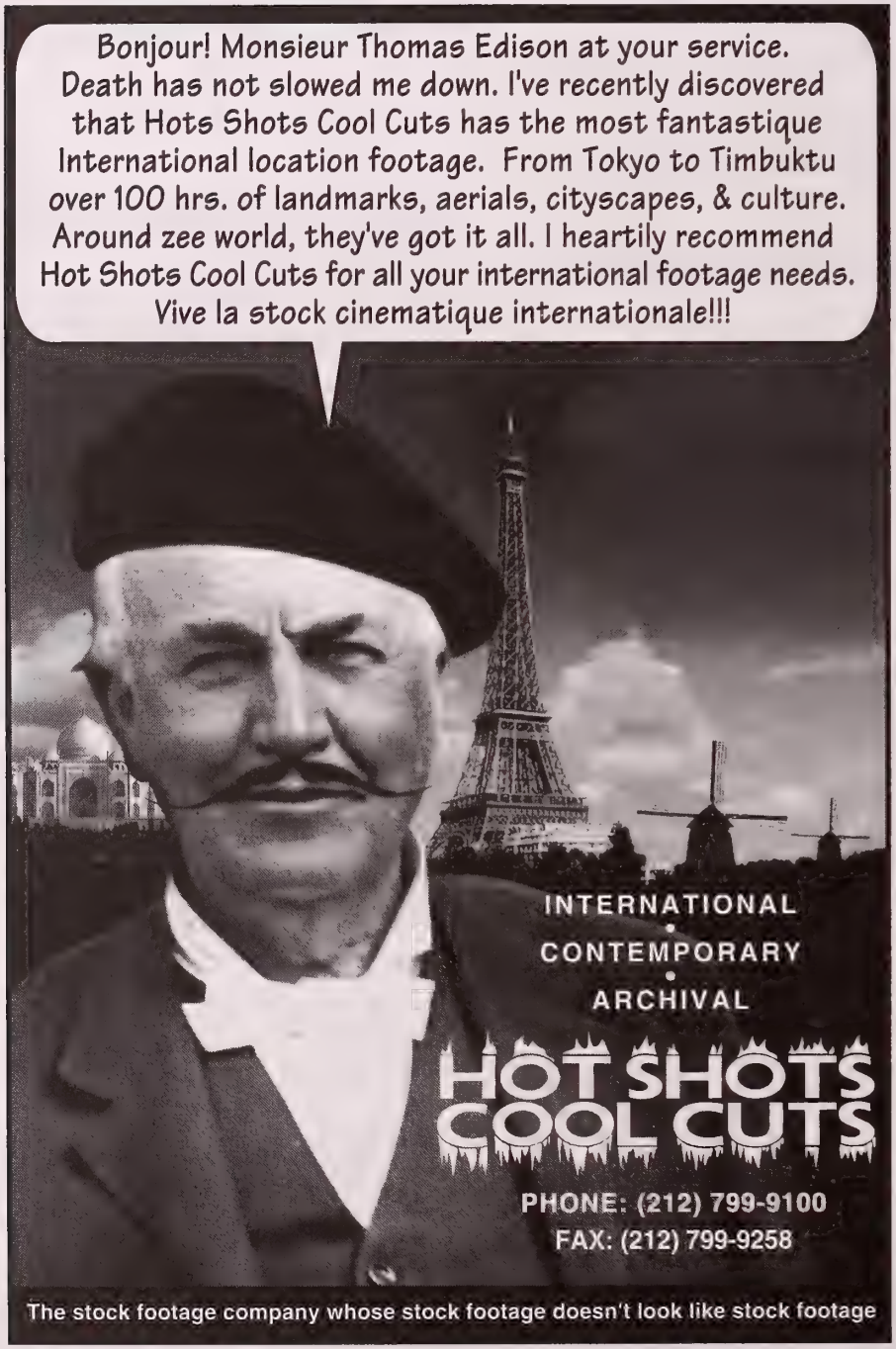


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says. That's certainly also true of her 1981 film *Conversations with Willard Van Dyke*, a portrait of a photographer/filmmaker (and later director of film at MoMA) who believed cinema could "change the world."

Currently, she spends long days sifting through some 20,000 photos logged in her personal archives, in preparation for a book and possible film of her own work.

Rothschild, who served on AIVF's board from 1974 to 1978, says she discovered a fount of like-minded activism. "We were mostly social documentarians," she recalls. "There were never any conflicts between genres at the beginning. We pulled together to share information, and anyone with ideas took initiative and made them happpen. It wasn't an organization serving a constituency," she adds. "It was a constituency organizing for itself, from the bottom up."

But, again, everything changed.

"In the eighties, people were moving on in their careers and had no more time to volunteer for the organization. There weren't any new, young people sharing the same points-of-view to come in and carry the ball. The organization would have collapsed; it became necessary to create a new entity, with a paid staff."

Rothschild, who says she is out of the professional film loop in the United States, has not found anything similar to AIVF in her adopted homeland. "There is no independent community in Europe as we know it in the U.S.A," she says. "Very little independent work is made here. In Italy there are almost no independent filmmakers, and very few documentary makers at all. Anything resembling a locally-made, TV-commissioned documentary is poorly-conceived, underfunded, didactic, boring, and televised at three in the morning."

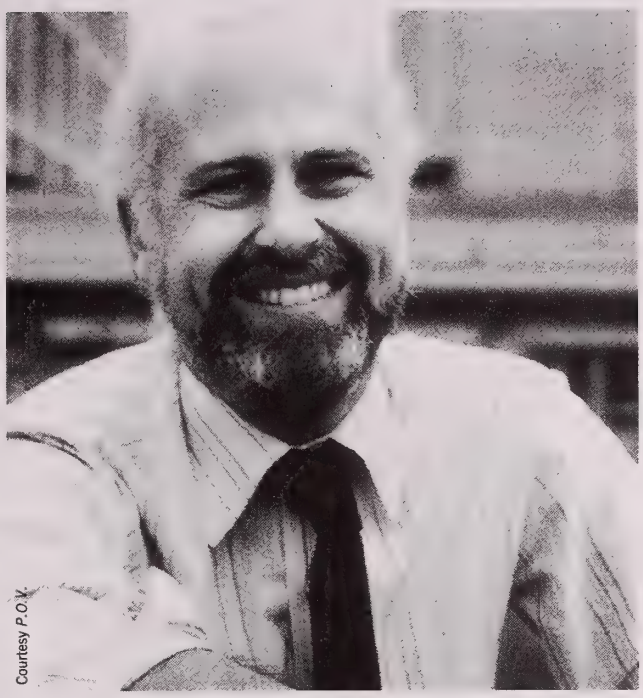
mark weiss
CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, *P.O.V.*

BY MITCH ALBERT

MARC WEISS HAS A DEFINITE POINT OF VIEW. IN FACT, HE HAS *P.O.V.*, A PBS SERIES THAT SHOWCASES INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCED DOCUMENTARIES. FOR THE LAST EIGHT YEARS, WEISS HAS SAT AT THE HELM OF THE SERIES, WHICH HAS WON SEVERAL EMMYS AND LAST YEAR WAS NOMINATED FOR THE NATIONAL TELEVISION CRITICS' ASSOC-

IATION AWARD FOR BEST PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM ALONG WITH SUCH NETWORK HEAVY-HITTERS AS *60 MINUTES*.

This year, Weiss and co-executive producer Ellen Schneider selected 10 docs for broadcast from approximately 500 submissions. (Past gems include Michael Moore's *Roger & Me* and Peter Friedman's *Silverlake Life: the View From Here*, which aired last year).


Courtesy *P.O.V.*

Weiss, 45, sat on the AIVF board on and off for over a decade. In the beginning, he recalls, it was "a wild and woolly scene. A lot of people who became filmmakers were changed by the sixties. There was passion in the air—movements against [the war in] Vietnam, for civil rights, whatever it was that drove people and opened them up to new ideas."

Weiss took part in the initial meetings held at Ed Lynch's downtown loft, where "open discussions" were held among local filmmakers for what may have been the first time. "A lot of independents didn't know each other," Weiss recalls. "They never all got together in one room. Any meetings were very ad hoc, or people met each other by chance."

Weiss' AIVF experience appears to have presaged his career, in which similar ideals have been replicated with success. During the seventies he was codirector of Independent Cinema Artists and Producers, a nonprofit "AIVF spinoff" distribution company that focused on selling independent films to television. He springboarded from there to organize the Alternative Cinema Conference, which gathered together 400 filmmakers interested in social issues. Later, Weiss headed the Media Network, a resource/training center that helped communities nationwide use films effectively for educational purposes.

All of which led up to his latest endeavor: "*POV* started when I was in the process of leaving the Media Network after seven years," he says. "It made a lot of sense given my background." Weiss worked on his own films from 1969 to 1977, but gravitated more readily to the distribution side of the profession. "There was not a lot of work being done [in the distribution of independent films]," he says. "I thought I could contribute more than being just another filmmaker out there trying to raise money. "Because I come from an independent background, I put a lot of money and energy into the promotion of other people's work. And unlike PBS, we try to pay a reasonable sum to the filmmakers [whose works are screened on *P.O.V.*]."

Weiss, via *P.O.V.*, is on the front lines in the struggle not only to show independent works per se, but to allow statements to be made that are elsewhere stifled. "There are strains of conservatism present in this country, even with a Democrat in the White House," Weiss says, "and they're still very strong." He cites the considerable furor over Marlon Riggs' 1991 documentary *Tongues Untied* as evidence that all is not well in the land of freedom of expression. "Right-wing groups attacked stations in their own communities all over the country when *Tongues Untied* was broadcast [as part of that year's *P.O.V* selection]. The idea that a black homosexual has anything to say is impossible to these people. They want to keep the discussion narrow, to homogenize it." As a result, the film was excised from the series in a number of American markets.

One hot property in the upcoming *P.O.V.* series is *One Nation Under God*, a film Weiss describes as bringing "a fiction sensibility to a documentary subject." The film, by Teo Maniaci and Fran Rzeznick, began as a fiction screenplay that explored efforts to transform gay people into straights. There turned out to be more than a core of truth to the premise, Weiss says, so the directors "decided to go for 'reality' instead."

As for AIVF, Weiss endorses the direction the organization has taken. "It has a good tradition," he says. "It's not run the same way anymore... but that's a natural process of evolution. You can't always be dependent on volunteers. And it's not some kind of *business* idea: it's still responsive to filmmakers' needs."

AIVF members automatically receive *POV*'s annual call for entries. Nonmembers may call (212) 989-8121 to be placed on the mailing list.

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ADVENTURES IN ADVOCACY

ADVOCATING FOR THE RIGHTS OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA ARTISTS HAS TWO DECADES. FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LAWRENCE SAPADIN REVIEWS THE ORGANIZATION'S STRUGGLES AND VICTORIES ON THE ADVOCACY FRONT—FROM CHANGES IN FEDERAL COPYRIGHT LAWS TO THE CREATION OF ITVS.

BY LAWRENCE SAPADIN

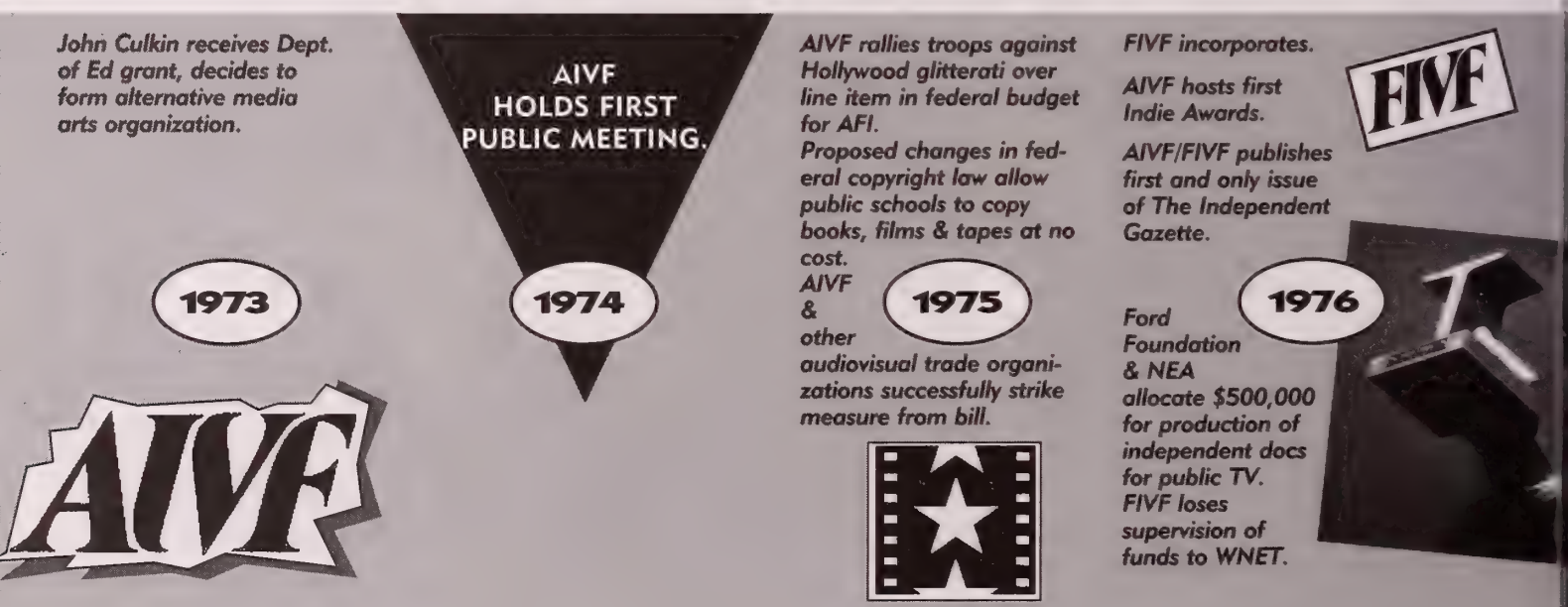
DURING MY TENURE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AIVF AND FIVF FROM LATE 1980 TO JANUARY 1991, the staff would conduct a retreat every few years to imagine what the future might hold for us and for the field. In thinking about the organization's development, I often drafted a three- or five-year plan.

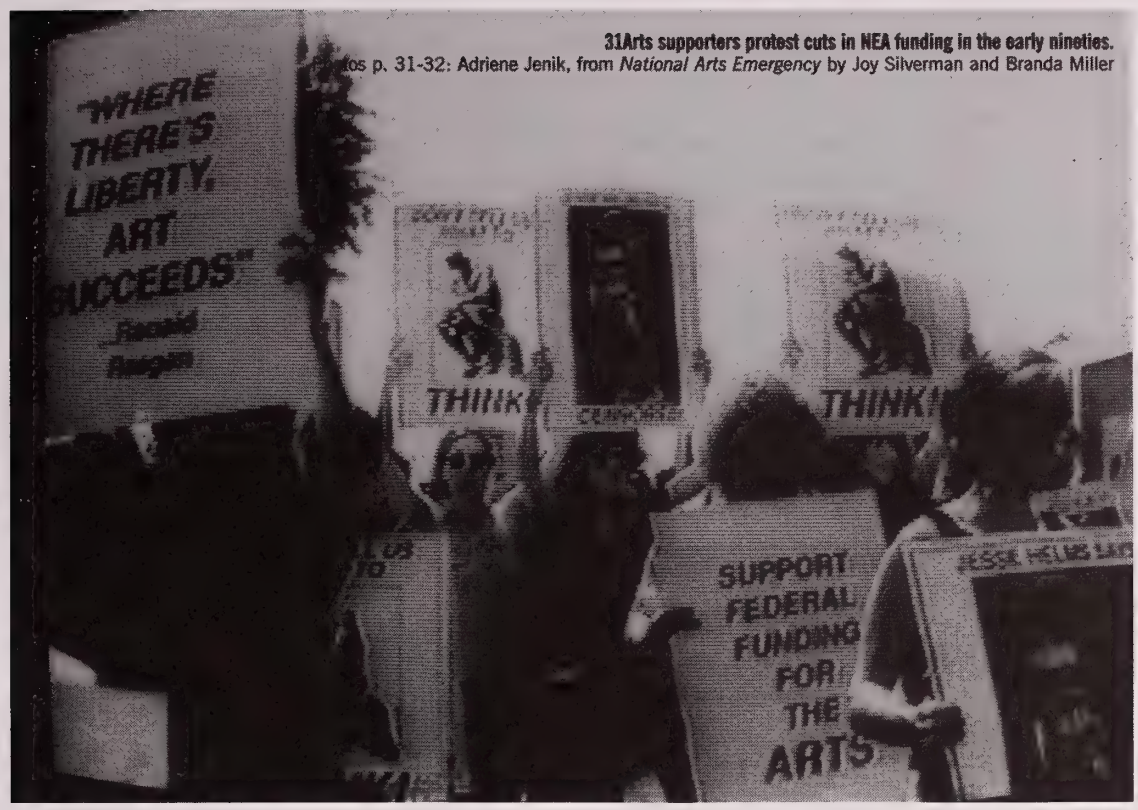
The in-house documents were generally very optimistic. Imagining an ideal future made it easier for me to navigate through the more difficult day-to-day realities of running a membership organization in the eighties.

In addition to the optimistic documents, however, I kept a private three-year plan, which I referred to as The Doomsday Scenario. In them, I always reached the same conclusion: If all state, federal, and foundation funding were to dry up, the organization's activities—relying on membership dollars alone—would be reduced to just the two most essential: advocacy and *The Independent*. Advocacy because members must have a way to change things for the better; *The Independent* because they need to communicate amongst themselves to organize advocacy efforts.

I continue to believe that advocacy is among AIVF's most important functions. Yet it can consume a limitless amount of the organization's resources—human and financial—and is almost impossible to support through fundraising or earned-income dollars.

Just how important is advocacy for AIVF? For the field? Thinking back to the time I was involved firsthand in the organization's battles and what I know of the earlier struggles, I am struck by the broad range of issues in which AIVF has been engaged and the variety of strategies it has pursued. This has as much to do with the diversity of AIVF's membership as with the commitment and flexibility of its board and staff.





31Arts supporters protest cuts in NEA funding in the early nineties.
Photos p. 31-32: Adriene Jenik, from *National Arts Emergency* by Joy Silverman and Branda Miller

funding process through the NEA. That same year, certain provisions of revised federal copyright laws threatened to undermine the educational market for independent work. The National Education Association had succeeded in writing into law a special exemption giving public schools the right to copy books, films, and tapes at no cost, a move which could have done away with a major source of income for producers and distributors of educational films and videos. AIVF took action by joining forces with other audiovisual trade organizations to strike the measure from the bill, and they succeeded.

The ink had hardly dried on what became the Copyright Act of 1976 when public television reform captured the organization's attention. AIVF was only three years old. Yet in combination with activists around the country, the organization obtained landmark legislation requiring that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) reserve "substantial" program funds for work by independent producers. While the lack of adequate definition of "substantial" introduced a period of continuous wrangling about the level of funding for independents, there was nevertheless a powerful mandate that the organization could build upon. That language, and the public record that AIVF created through continued monitoring of public TV funding activity, made possible the eventual creation of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) in 1988, eleven years later.

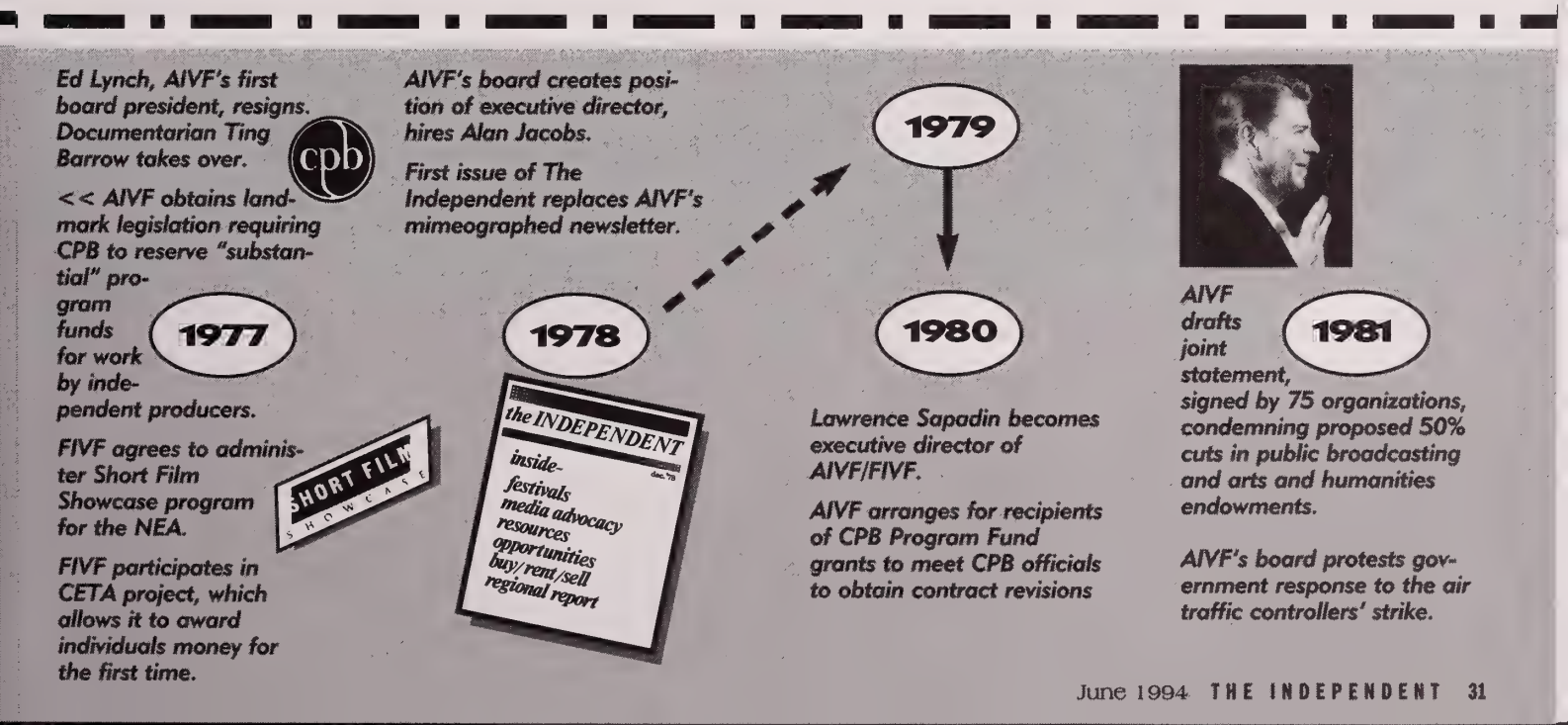
The Earliest Victories

The founding of the organization was in large part the result and furtherance of advocacy efforts that began in the mid-seventies. Two issues of particular importance to the organization's earliest members were changes in the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA's) funding procedure and in federal copyright laws.

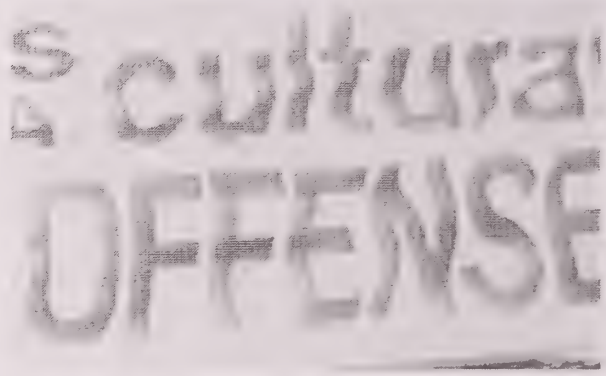
In both instances, independents united effectively to make their stance known and to change what could have been two devastating blows to the community. Back in 1974, independents intervened in a contentious dispute over whether the NEA should funnel media funds through the American Film Institute (AFI) rather than funding producers directly. This could have been detrimental to independent producers, whose work was considered low on the AFI's priority list at the time. But AIVF founder Ed Lynch rallied the association's members, and eventually the field succeeded in preserving a more open

Fighting for ITVS

For me, of course, the culmination of AIVF's advocacy efforts in the eighties was the three-year struggle that led to the cre-



ation of the ITVS. Independents had been frustrated from the start of the decade with CPB's lackluster response to the independent producer mandate of the 1978 legislation. As congressional hearings on new 1984 public TV funding legislation drew near, I proposed to CPB that it meet with independent producer representatives to avoid a public dispute, which could have jeopardized the Corporation's own request for increased funding. CPB agreed. Prior to the meeting, AIVF contacted the two-dozen producers representatives whom CPB had invited, provided them with background information and position papers, and arranged for the entire group to stay in the same hotel and meet informally prior to CPB's meeting. The far-flung group—most of whom had never met—came to the meeting with a common agenda and demands. As a result, CPB negotiators agreed to recognize the group formally, make certain funding increases, and hold regular meetings with a smaller group of representatives throughout the year to discuss funding policies and procedures. Unfortunately, the CPB board later vetoed the increases in independent producer funds, shattering the brief producer-CPB alliance on Capitol Hill. However, the process of meeting and negotiating was, for the producer reps, the beginning of a national coalition that would eventually win the battle to create a separate independent television service.



By 1986, the thrice-yearly meetings with CPB had proved unfruitful, making a push for a new approach inevitable. A group of Bay Area producers, headed by Larry Daressa of California Newsreel, revived a call for a new and separate independent producer program service. (The AIVF board had called for a separate fund in 1984, but the independent producer leadership in other parts of the country weren't ready for that approach at the time.) The dozen-or-so member AIVF advocacy committee, under the leadership of board president Robert Richter, shaped a proposal for a national independent program service and, working closely with the Bay Area producers, created a national coalition.

The coalition (the full name of which was the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers—a mouthful) embarked on a two-year public education and legislative campaign. Based at AIVF's offices, the coalition organized and mobilized media centers and producer organizations nationwide. Seeing the need to reach out beyond the media world, the coalition hired producer Janet Cole to enlist the support of non-media public interest organizations. Scores signed on—including labor, church, women's, consumer and other diverse groups—and further publicized the coalition's efforts through their newsletters and magazines. Jeffrey Chester, a producer, publicist, and media activist, unleashed his promotional talents to obtain extensive media coverage of the ITVS struggle, which included an influential op ed piece in *Broadcasting* magazine and a pro-producer commentary on CBS's *Sunday Morning*. Larry Hall, a Bay Area public television reform veteran and key player in the 1978 public TV legislation, was the coalition's legislative director and developed complex relationships with key legislative aides in both the House and the Senate.

Miraculously, as hearings began in early 1988, we saw our issue shift from a marginal irritation to the front-burner; key congressional staffers wanted it resolved. After a first round of hearings in the Senate, congressional staffers forced public broadcasting representatives to sit down with coalition representatives and work out a non-legislative compromise. But just as a solution was about to be reached, CPB abruptly broke off the talks, infuriating lawmakers as well as producers. Because of CPB's cancellation, the key congressional committee chair, Rep. John Dingle, had legislative language drafted creating an independent production service. The language was incorporated into the 1988 Telecommunications Act and was signed into law in November.

The exhausting victory was followed by two years of wrangling between independents and CPB over how the new service would be structured and funded—a delay that made the start-up more difficult than it should have been. The delay also created confusion and distrust in the field, and opened up an avenue of attack by right-wingers in Congress who were opposed to all public TV funding and used ITVS as a convenient and vulnerable target.

Nearly four years later, ITVS is still a work-in-progress with supporters and detractors. How could it be otherwise? But the service is pumping $6 million a year into independent production at a time when other traditional funding sources have decreased or disappeared entirely.

Ringing in the Eighties When I arrived at AIVF in December

AIVF joins public interest coalitions that ultimately succeed in inserting public access provisions into Cable Act of 1984.



1982



1983

AIVF continues pressuring CPB regarding independent programming

AIVF board calls for independent production fund separate from CPB to produce works for broadcast on public television.

1984

1985

AIVF's advocacy committee successfully negotiates with Copyright Office and Screen Actors' Guild (SAG) to get special breaks for low-budget independents.

After a group of Bay Area producers revives call for a separate independent producer program service, AIVF's advocacy committee shapes proposal & creates national coalition.

1986



Indie Awards.

1980, ITVS wasn't even a dream. A film student who had gone to law school, I was practicing labor law in Manhattan when I decided to look for a way to combine my legal background with an interest in filmmaking.

My second day on the job, I got a call from Ralph Arlyck, a member and one of the people responsible for the 1978 public TV legislation. He was also one of the first independents to receive money from the CPB Program Fund, which had been created partly in response to the independent producer mandate in the 1978 public TV law. Arlyck had just received CPB's contract, and it contained a number of provisions he didn't feel he could sign. What could AIVF do?

Together, we telephoned the others selected for funding, who shared similar concerns about the contract. We asked them not to sign, and instead to contribute toward having a lawyer to negotiate with CPB for changes on behalf of the group. Robert Freedman, an entertainment attorney, was retained, and he went down to Washington, DC, with a few producers to meet CPB officials. In the end, the producers obtained a number of revisions that made the contract much more producer-friendly. The experience was a clear example of how AIVF could organize independents to change the conditions for independent production. (A dozen years later, under a new executive director, Martha Gever, AIVF played the same role in relation to the first ITVS contract, again organizing grant recipients to hold out collectively for a better contract, again with success.)

Nightmare on Arts Street In early 1981, the Reagan Administration released its first budget. Bad news. It called for the gutting of just about every public interest program, from food stamps to legal services, and included a proposal to slash public broadcasting and the arts and humanities endowments by 50 percent. AIVF's board of directors authorized the expenditure of unbudgeted funds to organize an interdisciplinary arts press conference in protest of the budget cuts.

AIVF drafted a joint statement condemning the proposed budget cuts, which was signed by more than 75 organizations with an interest in diverse artistic expression. These ranged from the Alliance of Literary Organizations to the Studio Museum of Harlem, the United Church of Christ and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. A downtown movie theater donated its space. Speakers included producers Claudia Weill, Barbara Kopple, and Bill Greaves, along with representatives of the American Federation of Musicians, Poets, and Writers and the Association of Hispanic Arts. Letters and telegrams of support were received from Robert Redford, Leontyne Price, and other celebrities. AIVF was able to help the entire arts community go on record in vigorous opposition to these deep cuts.

As the budget worked its way through Congress, lawmakers were bolstered by public outcries from the arts community around the country. They resisted the Reagan juggernaut, preserving, if not expanding, funding for most programs, including public TV and the arts.

Joining Forces with PATCO In the summer of 1981, the Reagan Administration, not content to go after people on food stamps, took on the unions. It did this by performing the public execution of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization, or PATCO. The air traffic controllers had gone on strike over a number of issues, including safety concerns. As public employees, they were prohibited from striking. This kind of strike generally resulted in stiff fines for the union and at worst the temporary jailing of one or two union leaders. Here, however, the Administration responded by summarily firing all the air traffic controllers and hiring replacement workers. The union was destroyed.

AIVF's board responded with a resolution protesting the draconian government response to the public employee strike. While not condoning the strike itself, the board, as leader of a trade association, expressed its solidarity and its concern that another association could be so easily destroyed for trying to protect the collective rights and well-being of its members. Years later, when AIVF was organizing support for the creation of the ITVS, it received valuable support from several labor organizations.

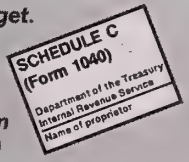
Public Access on Cable Throughout the early eighties, federal cable legislation became a focus. Previously, the cable industry had been governed by local city contracts with cable operators, plus Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations. There was no body of federal law governing cable.

Public interest groups, including media arts organizations, struggled to incorporate adequate public access provisions in the emerging federal legislation. The danger was that, in the deregulatory environment of the Reagan Administration, national legislation would offer less public access than the patchwork quilt of local franchises already provided. Cable industry representatives, on the other hand, argued that access requirements violated their First Amendment rights as electronic publishers, and that it was unnecessary to regulate cable since there was adequate competition from other television delivery mechanisms (broadcast, home video, satellite, etc.).

AIVF becomes leading member of national coalition Artists for Tax Equity, aimed at reversing 1986 tax reform legislation that is disadvantageous to freelancers.

AIVF participates in **1987** ***statewide coalition for the next several years to limit cuts in NYSCA's budget.***

FIVF Donor-Advised Fund initiated. From 1987 to 1990



After a first round of Senate hearings, Congress forces public broadcasting reps to sit down with coalition members and work out a non-legislative compromise.

Indie Awards. **1988**

The Independent Television Service (ITVS) is created in response to a mandate by Congress for independent producers to supply innovative programming to public television.

The culture wars heat up, with NEA barraged by right-wing attacks on Mapplethorpe, Serrano, Finley et al. AIVF spearheads field's grassroots lobbying efforts to preserve funding for NEA & prevent content. restrictions.



1989

The NEA fight spills over into congressional reauthorization. AIVF continues to rally grassroots support for the

1990

1991

Martha Gever becomes executive director of AIVF/FIVF.

The cable industry lobby benefitted from the fact that at the time relatively few people had cable. Anybody who was actually hooked up to a cable system knew perfectly well that the competition argument was utter nonsense, and that cable was a natural monopoly that required more, not less, regulation. From about 1982 to 1984, AIVF participated in the various public interest coalitions that ultimately succeeded in building a significant level of public access into the Cable Act of 1984. Today, cable access centers in communities around the country are a force for democratic communications and a training ground for independent and community media artists.

Day-to-Day Concerns More relevant to our members' day-to-day concerns were 1) how could they afford to send an archive-quality print to the U.S. Copyright Office to register their copyright; and 2) how could they afford union actors on a very low-budget feature project?

Benefitting from the donated legal services of Eugene Aleinikoff, AIVF's Advocacy committee entered negotiations with the Copyright Office and the Screen Actors' Guild (SAG) in the mid-eighties to get special breaks for low-budget independents.

In the first instance, we got the Copyright Office to permit producers to substitute videotapes temporarily for film prints as long as they had fewer than 10 prints. A filmmaker could, therefore, submit a tape and keep using his or her print for festival exhibition or screenings to potential distributors. Then, once a distributor bought the film and made some prints, one copy could be sent down to Washington for the national archives.

In the second instance, there was a cadre of low- and no-budget dramatic feature producers who wanted to use union talent but were unable to pay the rates of even SAG's low-budget agreement. If union actors worked on non-union productions and were discovered, they could be expelled from the union. SAG was not averse to cutting a deal for very low-budget art films. As always, however, there were thorny definitional issues: What productions would be eligible? How could you keep out commercial pictures being made on a shoestring? What if a small art film took off after some good reviews and ended up making lots of money?

After extended negotiations, SAG created a special agreement that pegged new, very low rates to limited distribution: A film could be made under the "Limited Distribution" Agreement if it had a very low budget and was only going to be exhibited in small, art house theaters. If it was distributed more broadly (reflecting commercial success), the higher rates of the regular low-budget agreement would kick in.

Coalition for Tax Equity There was a time when filmmaking offered a tremendous tax shelter for the wealthy. However, investment tax credit provisions were abused and earned moviemaking a bad name at the Internal Revenue Service. The tax credits were eventually eliminated, but the IRS (and Congress) have maintained a serious distrust of filmmakers ever since.

In 1987, artists of all stripes organized to remedy an injustice that was created in the 1986 tax reform legislation. Under the 1986 Act, artists were obliged to capitalize all their expenses, matching them to the revenues of specific projects rather than simply deducting expenses in the year in which they were incurred. This created an almost impossible record-keeping problem for artists, including filmmakers.

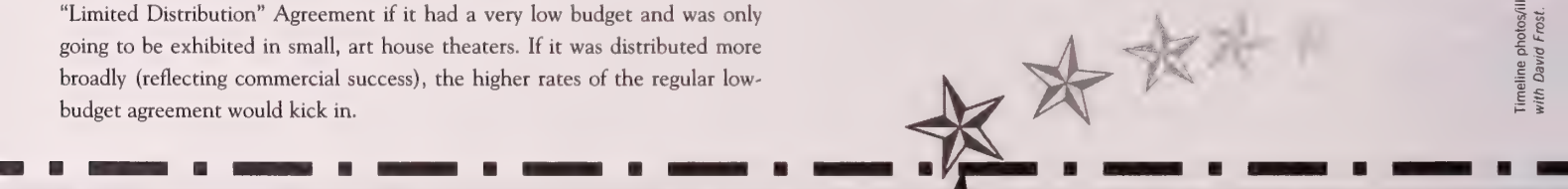
AIVF became a leading member of a national coalition, Artists For Tax Equity, that aimed at reversing this new rule. Happily, the rule was reversed for almost all artists. Unhappily, filmmakers were not included in the changes. Congress did, however, provide some minor improvements in the tax situation for filmmakers.

The Advocacy Dilemma AIVF is advocacy. And the history of AIVF's advocacy, from the beginning, has been one of remarkable success given the organization's (and the field's) limited resources. This is due, of course, to the zillions of hours of free labor contributed by AIVF's board and advocacy committee and the scores of activists who participated in each of the issues described above and continue to lobby for independents on Capitol Hill.

But while AIVF's advocacy has been central to the organization, and valuable to the field, it is incredibly costly. In the long run, it may increase the organization's visibility and indirectly attract new members. In the short run, however, it is an expensive activity with no income stream. The organization's board and its membership continue to grapple with the difficult question of just how much advocacy AIVF can afford and still remain faithful to its mission and history. But at least we can do so standing upon a 20-year record of efforts to improve conditions for independent video- and filmmakers and to increase the public's access to their work.

Lawrence Sapadin provides legal and consulting services to independent producers.

Timeline photos/illustrations (beginning on p. 30, l. to r.) courtesy AIVF archives; *Frontline*; Panasonic; AIVF archives; Kathy Smith; The Estate of Robert Mapplethorpe; Karen Finley; ...*talking with David Frost.*



AIVF helps ITVS's first round of Open Call grant recipients negotiate revisions in ITVS contract.

CPB comes under pressure from right-wing for alleged liberal bias; reauthorization of CPB stalls in Congress. AIVF joins efforts by media activists to counter the assault.

1992

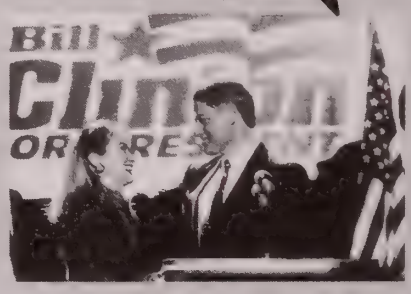
Ruby Lerner becomes executive director of AIVF/FIVF.

AIVF creates three-year plan as part of reevaluation process for NEA Advancement Grant.

AIVF hires advocacy director, Martha Wallner.

AIVF becomes member of Telecommunications Policy Roundtable, composed of public interest organizations attempting to ensure that public interest issues are addressed in telecommunications legislation.

1993



WNET-New York cancels Independent Focus series. AIVF participates in efforts to protest the cancellation & pressure station to include independents in future programming.

The Independent undergoes major redesign.

AIVF helps to form consortium of media organizations to strengthen advocacy efforts.

1994

AIVF's twentieth anniversary.





Barbara Kopple, whose works include *Harlan County, U.S.A.* (pictured), was one of the few female documentarians working during the seventies who chose not to focus on feminist issues.
Courtesy Cabin Creek Center for Work and Environmental Studies

Field of Dreams

Since the early seventies, three generations of independent media artists have learned that if you make a good film or video, people will watch. Ruby Rich traces the development of the elusive field and sizes up the state of the media arts in the current decade.

BY B. RUBY RICH

From a seventies perspective, the eighties have often been characterized as anticlimax, or, worse, betrayal. Not at all. I should know: I was formed professionally by the seventies. I started working in the field back in 1972, when a friend and I founded the Woods Hole Community Film Society. By January 1973, I was selling opening-night tickets to the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where I worked for the next five years before starting my career as a critic.

My birthright was film exhibition, although my allegiances were always split between audience and artist. At the Film Center, we hosted everyone from Werner Herzog (who could talk about himself until all hours of the night) to Kenneth Anger (great stories about shopping for a shoe to fit the devil's hoof) to Jill Godmilow (who stayed in my loft when she came as the star guest for our women's film festival with her documentary *Antonia: A Portrait of the Woman*, one of the first to break through to theatrical release). It was a different world then, economically, aesthetically, and politically. But it's foolish to claim it was a better one.

To be sure, it was exciting. The world of alternative film was being shaped both in the U.S. and internationally. Documentary, for the first time, encompassed diverse constituencies both in terms of audiences and makers. Videotape was invented and became simultaneously an art-world fetish and an organizer's dream. Feminism and the women's movement changed the nature of the field, empowering women on both sides of the camera and spawning a body of critical theory which, for better and worse, has dominated the academic terrain ever since.

The seventies, however, also comprised an intensely stratified and increasingly segregated society. Underneath the bohemian trappings, the same aura of white male middle-class privilege that had dominated so many parts of the New Left and the early Women's Liberation movements also hung over the world of independent film and video. As proof, try imagining a retrospective

of seventies documentaries by filmmakers of color, or so-called political (ie., not feminist) documentaries of the seventies by women. (Hint: if Barbara Kopple, Cinda Firestone, and Deborah Shaffer are declared off-limits, you're in big trouble.) Because of affirmative-action regulations that kicked in during the late sixties, producers of color had more luck with television than in the rough-and-tumble world of independent filmmaking, where borderline salaries, Darwinian self-promotion, and the occasional trust fund were the frequent requirements of fame. In the early eighties, curious about the workings of independent financing, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) polled its grant recipients asking where the balance of their film funding had been found: In the clear majority of cases, the answer was family.



Film Forum at its present home on Houston Street in Manhattan.
Courtesy Film Forum

The "field" to which we think we belong was literally invented in the seventies, helped by the establishment of entities like the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and NYSCA's film and media programs. It was a time of normalization, when the guerilla activity self-started on the margins during the late sixties reign of the "counter-culture" assumed a mantle of legitimacy and began to take itself seriously. It was also a time when politics, increasingly unsuccessful in the electoral arenas, moved into the cultural sphere. The film centers that came into being most often were started by types like myself, frustrated at the politically and aesthetically conservative products of the commercial television and film industries, eager to build bridges to and between communities, and filled with generational pride and excitement at what was happening on the screen for the first time—what was being shown, and who, and how. In immigration terminology, then, this would be "first-generation."

My own migration to New York City coincided with a key moment for the field. I came to Manhattan on the cusp of the decades, entering NYSCA as director of the Film Progam on the first Monday after the New Year, 1981. I was ready to transform myself from a renegade critic to a responsible bureaucrat (although I'm not sure the switch had yet been effected when I left nearly 11 years later). During the late seventies, organizations like the Film Fund, the Independent Feature Project (IFP), and the Black Filmmakers Foundation (BFF) had been founded. One of my first official duties was attending the grand opening of the Film Forum's Watts St. site, where for the first time Karen Cooper could operate seven days a week with a real theater marquée, newspaper clout, and a loan from an experimental Ford Foundation project to make it all possible. One of my last duties, ironically, was staging a meeting between the NYSCA brass (Kitty Carlisle Hart and Peter Duchin) and the Film Forum's landlords, the Catholic Church hierarchy, in a failed attempt to stop the Church from evicting the Film Forum from this same facility.

But I wander: my point here is that the eighties marked a new level of infrastructure and ambition. The late-sixties model that had so dictated the seventies was gone, not even a memory to many of the youngsters contributing new blood to the movement, and already a dusty memory to the many veterans who had either retreated bitterly or moved on to new terrain. At the same time, the fledgling movements of culturally distinct cultural production that had given birth to such groups as Visual Communication, Asian CineVision, the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, Blacklight, NAATA, Cine Acción, the Guadelupe Cultural Center, Women Make Movies, and so on, came to fruition: clear about their mission, connected to communities, committed to survival, these groups were positioned to take advantage of eighties political life. The unprecedented emphasis on multiculturalism and the increased hunger for images of "underrepresented" communities (sparked by the rise of the Spike Lee generation in the domestic sphere and the coming of age of other cultural cinemas, notably Asian, in the international sphere) created a space for new work and new practitioners.

Hampered significantly by an ever-worsening funding environment, these organizations and film- and videomakers were helped by an enhanced box-office, academic currency, and political savvy. Their evolution has made the field dramatically different, and better. It must be said, though, that the fiercely Darwinian nature of the field has not changed substantially. For every filmmaker who succeeds in making a crossover film with foundation support, scoring a big-time release with a theatrical window, and/or garnering an Academy Award nomination, there are dozens—if not hundreds—forced into poverty by lack of subsidy, forced out of the field for lack of employment, or forced into bitterness by their inability to connect with audiences, funders, or critics. These harsh stakes were only raised by new rules and expectations during the eighties. The shift to feature production as the only status position in the field exacerbated inequities and wrought havoc, particularly with women's access.

Damn the access to equipment or Hollywood execs: it's the access to the world of the imaginary that still counts for many of us.

As ever, though, points of contradiction proliferate. A venue like the Sundance Film Festival has managed to reward as well as antagonize filmmakers and has accelerated both hopeful and depressing trends in the field. Actually, the same could be said of the nineties in general. While "access" has become an ever more pressing concern in terms of the media in general and independent film and video in particular, the term means something different than it did when I started out in the field. Today, access to equipment is not the issue. The eighties revolution in small-format video ensures that anyone with (or without) an idea can produce a tape, although whether access to a market can ever come remains in doubt.

Market, of course, is the word that really separates the wolf from the sheep and the post-sixties from the post-eighties world of creative endeavors. In film, though, the escalated costs of production, compounded by the move into features, made access a matter of attracting money. Like a magnet to filings, it

sometimes seemed that those best at raising money were those who already had it, even if they were operating in a downward-mobility mode. And breakthrough African-American commercial moviemaking proved the rules as often as it broke them: the Hudlin brothers came from blue-chip colleges and financially solid backgrounds. Spike Lee came with a ready-made artistic inheritance. Wayne Wang could stoke his career with the help of offshore investment money from Hong Kong as surely as Robert Rodriguez could jump-start *El Mariachi* with the help of a University of Texas education and heavy-duty Mexican connections. The exceptions—Julie Dash, for instance—often had a harder time of it. Video offered some exceptions, with Sadie Benning the most notable (teenage, bedroom locations, two-figure budgets).



Two-figure-budget documentarian Sadie Benning's video *Jollies*.
Courtesy Video Data Bank

It's easy for cynicism to take over. Many filmmakers are technophobic, which for veterans today often means videophobic. Too bad. Most formal invention now takes place in video, created by generation X-ers who've come out of art school or liberal arts colleges instead of today's guild-like film schools. They have the luxury of working in a lower-cost medium (so long as postproduction is subsidized by their schools, that is) without a formal aesthetic history, in other words, a medium with boundaries that are more fluid and where rules are made, provisionally at that, just to be broken. In documentary, I'm convinced by a statement made by a student of mine at UC-Berkeley: "As far as I'm concerned, video is the 16mm of the nineties." If video is the future, in terms of production, film still rules the present, in terms of exhibition.

Alas, this is a field with zero respect for seniority, in which paying your dues may mean nothing more than being perceived as a sap or has-been, and where big-budget movies are made by kids fresh out of film school. No wonder independent feature filmmaking, which started out as a rebellious regional movement about specificity of place and uniqueness of vision, has become increasingly the domain of twentysomethings on a long leash from daddy.

The problem is not just one of inequity. It's that the majority of films today are made by people who utterly lack *imaginative access*. They have virtually no access to the lives, dreams, struggles, problems, or obstacles faced by or lived by most people in this society. Sheltered by wealth, privilege, or both, isolated in a vocational ghetto, more conversant with characters than with actual people, they reproduce a certain kind of filmmaking because this is the only world they know. They can't imagine other kinds of people or lives or stories because their experience yields no such dimension. To be sure, there are filmmakers who do have fuller access to the imaginary and the real—but they rarely have access to the big money. And many other makers remain stillborn, never entering the field in the first place, because the odds are just too grim. Without European subsidy models, with decreasing access to higher education, with a predictably larcenous dependence on the "free" market to take care of culture, the United States is losing the very filmmakers it should be promoting for its own collective mental health and creative development. My friend Sheila, once an independent filmmaker, is finishing her second year of acupuncture school. My friend Jackie died without ever being able to make her magnum opus because her funding source thought she "wasn't ready yet."

Hegemonic order, though, isn't a concept in which I set much stock. The nineties, so difficult for some people, has proven itself equally invigorating for others. What feminism did for women's film- and videomaking (and theory-making) in the seventies, and what cultural movements around ethnic and racial self-determination did for African and Asian-American and Latino film and video production (not to mention festivals) in the eighties, the emergence of queer politics has done for lesbian and gay film—and particularly video—in the nineties. Indeed, the phenomenon is most akin to the feminist cultural explosion of the seventies in the far-flung ranks of its advocates and the hefty power being wielded by and for them. Nothing like inhabiting your historical moment to fuel work.

Queer studies is the fastest-growing academic sector (alongside cultural studies), university-press phenomenon, and magazine target audience. See, for example, the *How Do I Look?*, *Inside/Out*, and *Queer Looks* anthologies for theorizing, or such publications as *OUT*, *Ten Percent*, or *GLQ* for coverage and perspective. Lesbian and gay video has become a club presence as well as a flying-wedge of power for organizing efforts. The New Queer Cinema has been a major presence in mainstream venues for three years now. Lesbian feature filmmaking, while suffering the predictable handicap of its gender, is finally starting to catch up this spring with *Go Fish* and *Fresh Kill* out of the cans. Lesbian and gay film festivals are proliferating, with more than 80 worldwide, and their audiences are growing logarithmically. In San Francisco, the last Frameline festival racked up record admissions.

Derek Jarman may have died in body this winter, but his spirit lives on in the formally inventive and politically irreverent work now being produced. Fueled by responses to the tragedy of AIDS and the invisibility that permits a "Lesbian Chic" phenomenon, these new works cross genre lines to challenge, sustain, and communicate with their diverse and often divergent communities. In its embrace of political function, concern with formal style, awareness of film history and materiality, embrace of video's technological opportunities, and dedication to representation of the previously marginalized subject, this new queer movement represents a clear descendance in the finest lineage of the independent tradition. That the movement emphatically includes producers of color and also endorses video as a separate-but-equal partner with film in image production and manipulation are qualities that make it all the more modern.

The nineties, then, finds this strange field at a strangely inconsistent point:

At once growing and decaying, healthy in some areas and infirm in others, full of the contradictions of its own trajectory, its communities' stories, and the Clintonian moment in American politics. Nineteen-ninety-four is also, of course a Chiapas moment. An end-of-apartheid moment. Postmodernism may be a contemporary condition, but there's no end to master narratives yet. The vigor of independent film and video remains the story not (yet) told. Or told enough. Damn the access to equipment or Hollywood execs: it's access to the world of the imaginary that still counts for many of us.

Documentary and narrative production continues. Filmmakers plod along despite the fashions, doggedly looking for money under the least likely rocks. Every once in a while something like *Hoop Dreams* comes along and everyone's flabbergasted: a community documentary seven years in the making, backed by an old-time filmmaking collective. A story right out of the seventies? Except that the MacArthur foundation funded it, the Sundance Film Festival made it a hit, and Fine Line is handling distribution. Oh, and it's about two basketball-playing "inner-city" African-American kids, made by a white, way-past-teenage team.

So it goes in the nineties. There's movement. Jane Alexander get crowned queen of culture, with the hope she'll keep the censor wolf from the door even if no check's in the mail. New York City gets a Republican mayor and starts to find out what law-and-order men think of culture. (They reach for their gun?) The ITVS gets established by an act of Congress and provides new money to the field for the first time with no strings attached and no intermediaries. Two steps forward, one step back. Film Forum gets a triplex and Film in the Cities folds. The Video Data Bank issues the first home video collection of AIDS videotapes and stages a massive video drive-in in Chicago's Grant Park. Linda Blackaby's Neighborhood Film & Video Project invents a major international film festival for Philadelphia, and prospers at a whole new level. The New York Film Festival starts a video division that plays a few doors down. Most of my friends are on e-mail now. Some of them are getting CD-ROM. The new technology talk is as exhilarating and as full of shit as ever. Computers are about to meet video and mate for real. And we don't have a clue what the next 20 years will bring. Except for a hunch that wherever people still care about justice and beauty (and, alas, power and fame), their films and videotapes will still be made and watched. Stay tuned.

B. Ruby Rich writes for Elle, OUT, *the* Village Voice, Sight and Sound, *and other journals. She is the film/video reviews editor of* GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies. *She teaches a course in contemporary documentary every spring at the University of California, Berkeley.*



Reinol Martinez in Robert Rodriguez' no-budget *El Mariachi* (1993),
Courtesy Columbia Pictures

IKE & TINA TURNER



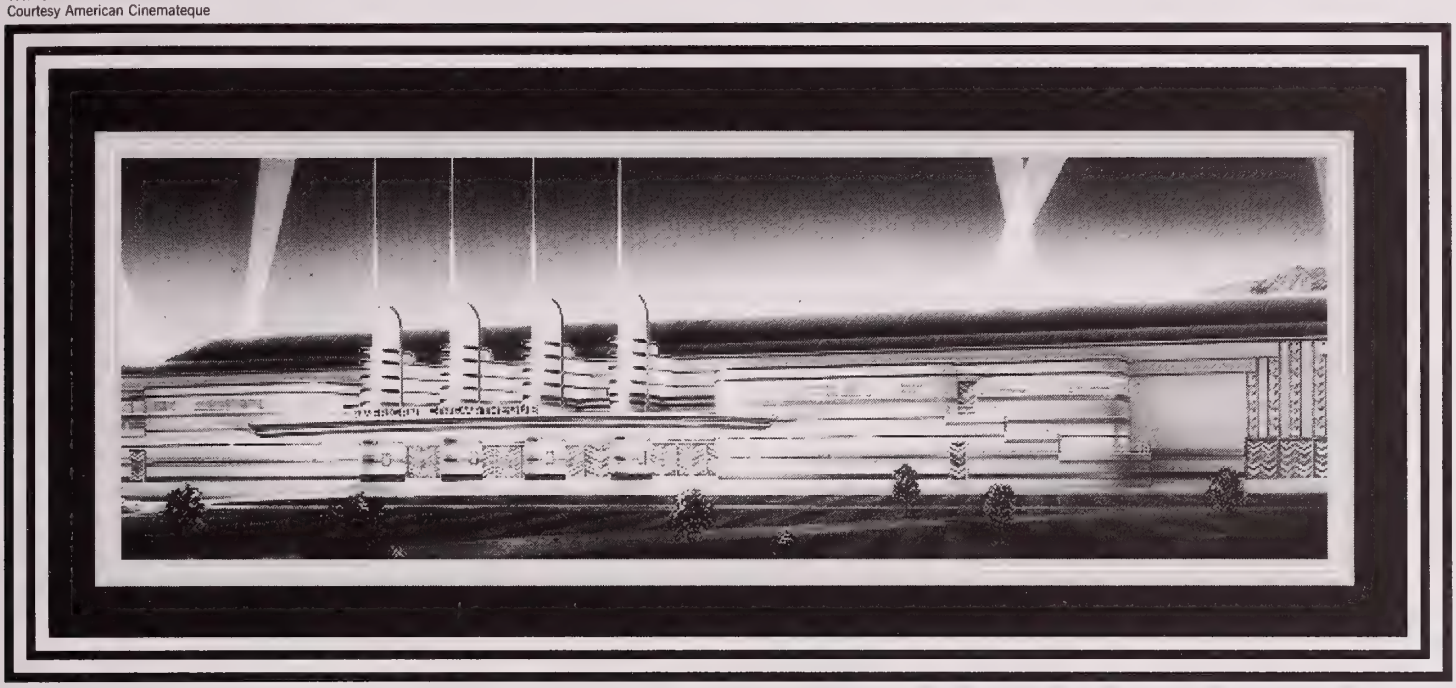
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Will the future see a revival in art house theaters?
Courtesy American Cinemateque

BACK TO THE FUTURE

What will the climate be like for independents in the year 2014? AIVF's executive director paints a rosy scenario and calls upon mediamakers to make her vision a reality.

BY RUBY LERNER

Vast economic, political, and societal changes have transpired over the last 10 years that would have been impossible to predict a decade ago. Few, for example, could have imagined the wholesale assault on public arts funding or the "demonizing" of living artists and their work. And who expected that in the midst of all that negativity, the independent field would triumph by creating an Independent Television Service (ITVS), legislated by Congress with a mandate to support innovative programming? The jargon that we have come to employ with such ease—fax, modem, baud rate, AVID, CD-ROM, Internet, on-line, bbs, video-on-demand, interactivity—has opened up a world of possibilities and fears. Since life doesn't come with a crystal ball, perhaps it is foolhardy to imagine the climate for independents 20 years from now. But here goes.

THE YEAR IS 2014. AIVF IS CELEBRATING ITS FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY, AND THE independent media field has never been healthier. In 1994, I could not have imagined "writing" this article by speaking into my voice-activated, wristwatch-sized computer-fax-modem-telephone-television (VoCo), which transforms the spoken word into text and transmits it to my home computing complex for editing. Nor could I have envisioned two AIVF members, one from North Dakota and one from Los Angeles, who have never met face-to-face, collaborating on the creation and interactive dissemination of an Academy award-winning documentary. We in the independent media field have been profoundly affected by such technological advances. But they have not worked against us as some initially believed they would.

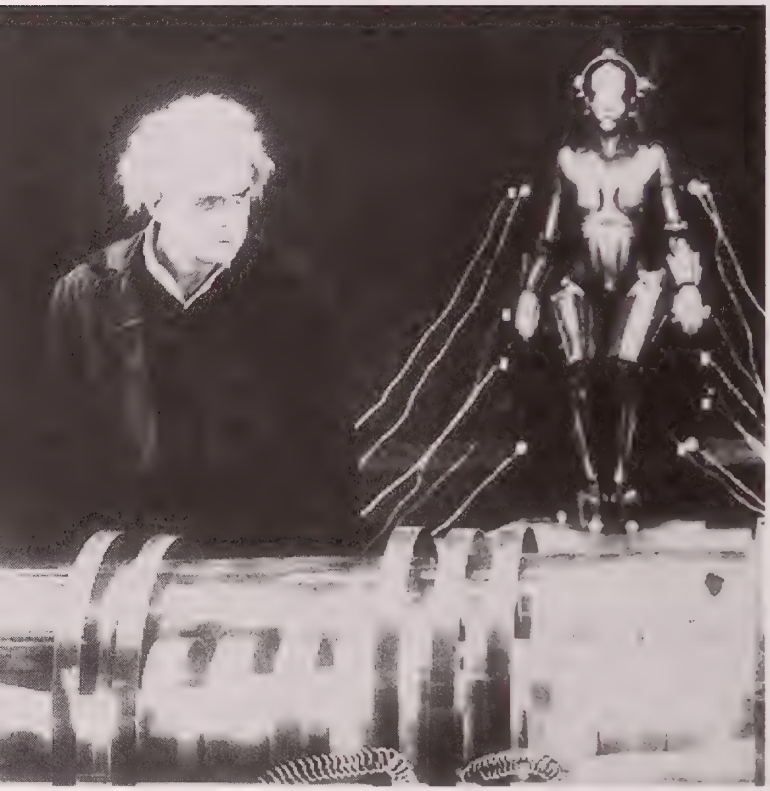
Very little might have been possible, however, had we not successfully secured legislation guaranteeing universal and affordable access to then-emerging technologies for human-profit organizations (as the nonprofit sector is now known). Because of grassroots lobbying efforts in the mid 1990s, all homes, schools, hospitals, libraries, and other community organizations were fully interactive by 1999. By the turn of the century, media arts centers, cable access centers, and community radio stations had joined forces to become comprehensive media resource centers. The hundreds of hybrid centers now offer training programs, access to interactive technologies, and centralized cablecasting and radio broadcasting services. They also present community screenings with audiences engaging makers in post-screening discussions by way of videoconference. Each is well supported by user fees from commercial enterprises—similar to the cable franchise fees that had earlier established and sustained cable access centers. The independent media community fought for the establishment of these fees in the mid-1990s, and the fight paid off.

The popularity of the new technologies didn't fully take hold until the first years of the new century. Tests conducted in the mid-1990s by Bell Atlantic, Time-Warner, and TeleCommunications, Inc., to measure consumer interest in the available interactive services proved inconclusive. But in retrospect this is not surprising; the test subjects were mostly members of an older generation less at home with multimedia interactive technologies. The early tests revealed little of the eventual explosion in popularity that would occur when those of elementary-school age in the mid-1990s (and fully accustomed to interactivity) reached early adulthood and the beginning of their major con-

sumer years.

No one, however, was quite prepared for the tremendous surge in popularity of independent work that accompanied the technological onslaught. Once decades of independently produced films and videos were catalogued and made available throughout the country via video server in the year 2000, a sizable new audience was discovered—especially in small towns and rural areas, which were previously denied access to most independent work. Now applauded everywhere for its diversity and feistiness, independent media projects are especially prized in an era when most infotainment options are dominated by the monovision of Disney-Telecommunications-Blockbuster-Bell (affectionately known as Mouse, Inc.), the sole survivor of mid-nineties merger mania.

Another reason for the success of independent media is that children are encouraged to appreciate—and create—alternative films and videos as early as the first grade. Mandated media literacy and media education programs, based on successful pilot projects pioneered during the early nineties in New Mexico, Texas, and Kentucky, were put into effect nationwide in 1998, and



INDEPENDENTS UNPLUGGED? Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, a silent-film fantasy of a futuristic city and its mechanized society, gave audiences a taste of the future back in 1926.

taught students both analytical and production skills. With a nation of students exposed to and creating their own independent work, the demand for a more diverse array of viewing options has grown steadily. Importantly for us, the stepped-up demand provides a new generation of media producers with employment opportunities.

AIVF's Member Skills Bank, developed in the mid-1990s, also has helped our members find work. In addition, the Bank has increased opportunities for members to find each other. A recent survey conducted by the organization revealed that more than half of AIVF's members have worked on projects with individuals they found via the Bank.

Several other factors, some quite unlikely, have also played a role in the independent arena's success. The erosion of the art house circuit, which began as early as the mid-1980s, hit the independent media community especially hard. By the early 1990s, many homes were fully equipped entertainment complexes, complete with CD players, large-screen TVs, VCRs, pay-per-view, cable, and home computers hooked into on-line services. These accoutrements made it possible for people to be "amused to death" right in their own homes. Now, of course, home-based systems make instantaneous worldwide communication easy and affordable and provide access to interactive educational programs in addition to offering individualized advice on topics from taxes to nutrition and gardening.

But it was the wide prevalence of telecommuting—working in the home—that had the most significant impact on our society. Not only did it reverse many years of pollution caused by auto emissions, but stress-related illnesses also fell markedly. With workers spending less time commuting and more hours at home during the day, by evening people are ready to get out of the house! And so, we have witnessed a resurgence in community life and community activities of all kinds, including cultural ones. The resurgence, which put to rest fears that people might never want to leave their isolated interactive pleasure fortresses to experience live, shared events, was aided, ironically, by the strength of on-line "virtual" communities. Leaders in the electronic-media field took an active role promoting community salons, reminiscent of the chautauquas—outdoor events that combined education with entertainment—of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

We're particularly proud that, working with state and local arts agencies, AIVF was able to organize the National Independent Media Touring Project, which has continued since the late 1990s. Modeled on the successful performing arts touring efforts of the 1970s and 1980s, and utilizing community organizations already adept at performing arts presentation, many media artists now support themselves in part through community screenings. Last year alone, more than 3,000 media artists traveled to communities throughout the country to present their work in person. Many remained longer to engage in school or community residency activities. While we still have a long way to go to catch up with the performing arts activity across the country (which generated over $64 million by the late 1980s), we certainly feel that progress has been made, given how limited media arts touring was in the last century. With touring schedules widely promoted via on-line bulletin board services, many producers receive additional invitations for screenings in communities near the ones they are scheduled to visit.

While the home continues to be a center for the passive entertainment some consider mindless at best, damaging at worst, it has also become one of the most popular venues for the distribution of independent media. In fact, the most revolutionary development in financial support for producers is that individual patrons began to provide the primary means of financing for independent work in the late 1990s, due to the establishment of the well-utilized National Independent Media Audience Database compiled by AIVF. The Database initially identified over four million independent media supporters. One well-known documentarian recently netted over $50,000 promoting her recently completed environmental work directly to the 200,000 people on the database with an expressed interest in environmental issues.

The database is also responsible for AIVF's recent successes on the advocacy front. Now that we have identified the vast constituency served by independents, we are able to activate them more effectively as critical issues arise.

BACK TO THE PRESENT. OKAY, SO MY WILDLY OPTIMISTIC SCENARIO FAILS TO take into account a plethora of very legitimate fears and concerns. But is this a completely improbable picture of FutureWorld? Perhaps. The independent media community doesn't currently have enough clout to assure that new technologies legislation favorable to the inclusion of independent voices will be passed.

One development that could have a positive impact on such legislation is the recent creation of the Media Arts and Community Media Consortium, in which AIVF is actively involved. The consortium—which currently includes

the Alliance for Community Media (ACM), the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers (NCIPBP), the National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB), the Independent Television Service (ITVS), National Asian American Telecommunications Arts (NAATA), and the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium—represents well over 10,000 media producers whose work reaches millions of Americans each year. Working together, the organizations will aggressively represent independent media concerns on a variety of issues, and in particular will attempt to make our presence felt as legislation surrounding the new technologies evolves.

Some of the projects I discuss in my futuristic scenario, including the National Independent Media Audience Database and the National Independent Media Touring Project, do not require legislation. They do, however, require a tremendouse amount of will, effort, and cold, hard cash. FIVF has already had preliminary conversations with several funders about these ideas.

The Member Skills Bank and producer collaborations on-line are just two examples of the kinds of programs AIVF hopes to inaugurate over the next few years. Others that we've recently put into place or plan to soon include a more active series of events at our home base in New York and around the country, a joint- membership program with other media organizations, an expanded book publications program, and more efficient provision of information.

On the occasion of our twentieth anniversary, we're also hoping to revive some of the participatory zeal of the organization's early years. That means we'll expect *The Independent*'s readers to initiate and take responsibility for projects they feel could create opportunities for their peers. One AIVF member did just that earlier this year by organizing monthly member gatherings in Manhattan. Out-of-state members plan to initiate similar get-togethers in their cities. The projects that we can take on as an organization with finite resources and staff will always be limited. But the work we can help *facilitate* is far greater.

Twenty years of representing and serving the independent field is a substantial achievement. But while we're toasting our accomplishments, let's also try to prevent ourselves from enduring future shock. It's going to take every ounce of our collective energies to ensure that 2014, like 1994, is a year of celebration.

Ruby Lerner is the executive director of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF). She also is publisher of The Independent Film & Video Monthly.

A Wish List for the Twenty-First Century

1. **Legislation guaranteeing universal and affordable access to new technologies for independents and nonprofits.** AIVF has joined forces with its colleague organizations in the independent media field and with the broader public interest community. Collectively, we hope to have a favorable impact on the legislation in development right now, legislation which could have far-reaching implications. Much telecommunications policy planning is being done at the state level, and we know that currently very few independents are involved in these efforts. For information about how to get more involved, contact Martha Wallner, advocacy coordinator, AIVF.



2. **On-line "virtual" communities, which promote in-person activities.** One of the fears most commonly expressed by members of our community is that virtual interaction could come to replace human interaction. The leaders in this area (like Mitch Kapor of the Electronic Frontier Foundation) are intent on seeing the technology enhance, not supplant, in-person communication. Within our own community, we must work toward this end as well.

3. **Utilization of new technologies within AIVF.** We hope to use the technologies now available to enhance creative collaborations between and among producers; to enhance AIVF's communications with members and members' communication with each other; to more effectively provide information services; and to inform a broader public about independent media. If you have ideas on this front, contact Pamela Calvert, program director, FIVF.

4. **Mandated media literacy and media education programs in schools nationwide.** Arts education, which includes media education, is included in the Goals 2000 plans for major educational reform. We certainly have a friend in Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Many reform efforts, which include establishing the arts as part of a core curriculum, are happening at the state level. Get involved.

5. **The National Independent Media Touring Project.** The infrastructure of the independent media field is underdeveloped relative to other arts disciplines. The proposed project borrows a structure successfully utilized for years by the performing arts. My hope would be to work with state and regional arts agencies to develop hundreds of new media exhibition sites in communities, rural and urban, over a three-year period.

6. **The National Independent Media Audience Database.** NAMAC has posited that there are over four-million supporters of independent media in this country. If we knew those people by name, address, and areas of interest, we would have a solid advocacy base of citizen support for our work, as well as a powerful marketing and fundraising tool. It would take quite a lot of effort to get such a database set up, but once established, it could be used by commercial and non-commercial distributors, by independents themselves, and by exhibitors and other nonprofits.

7. **Increases in public and private support for the production and distribution of independent media.** As far as the public sector goes, we'll have to work very hard just to sustain the level of support we now have, and it will be a major task to educate foundations about why they should acknowledge media as a valid art form. Fortunately, there is leadership within the foundation community itself, so we hope receptiveness to media will improve in the not-too-distant future. —*R.L.*

Rather than remaining locked in the past, Chautauqua, pictured here, is undergoing a renaissance that is similar to the chautauquas of the late nineteenth century. Photo: June Regan, courtesy Video Data Bank

SUMMING UP THE DECADE

On the occasion of AIVF's twentieth anniversary, 22 independent-minded thinkers offer their views on the state of the media arts.

The Best of Times. The Worst of Times:

Depending on whom you ask, the last decade was both, either, or in some cases, neither. The eighties and early nineties are viewed by many independents as years of progress, with a long list of triumphs ranging from the formation of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) to the creation and distribution of films and videos by women, people of color, and gays and lesbians. Conversely, the past 10 years held numerous disappointments: the drying up of funding, the slow death of art houses, mounting censorship, and the frustration of trying—and failing more often than not—to find a home on public television.



The late Marlon Riggs (front, with black hat) and friends in his influential and controversial work, *Tongues Untied*. Courtesy *P.O.V.*

On the following pages, a collection of prominent mediamakers, funders, festival directors and others who have influenced independents over the last decade were asked the same two questions. Not surprisingly, their answers varied as much as the broad spectrum of works they have created, supported, and distributed.

1. What do you consider the high and low points of the past decade with regard to the field of independent media?

2. What do you consider the most influential or breakthrough film or video of the last 10 years?

Ang Lee
Feature film director

1. High: The success of *The Wedding Banquet*. Six years ago I wrote the script and potential funders in the U.S. said it was "too Chinese." The Chinese said it was "too gay." I didn't change the script at all. Just the times changed. Low: Until I got my Green Card four or five years ago, I was ineligible for grants in the U.S. and I had a lot of trouble raising money for my first film, *Pushing Hands*. I also think one disadvantage of being an independent is that you have to write your own scripts and often times those who can write well become directors over those who can direct.

2. *Stranger than Paradise* was made on a low budget and it was inspiring.

Lynn Hershman
Experimental film- and videomaker

1. High: Success of women like Julie Dash.

2. *Tongues Untied* because it gave voice to personal, previously unspoken issues, and did so in a poetic and courageous manner. I also include works by Tom Kalin, James Schamus, and Todd Haynes in this group.

Ed Hugetz
Senior vice president & provost, University of Houston; board member, NAMAC & ITVS

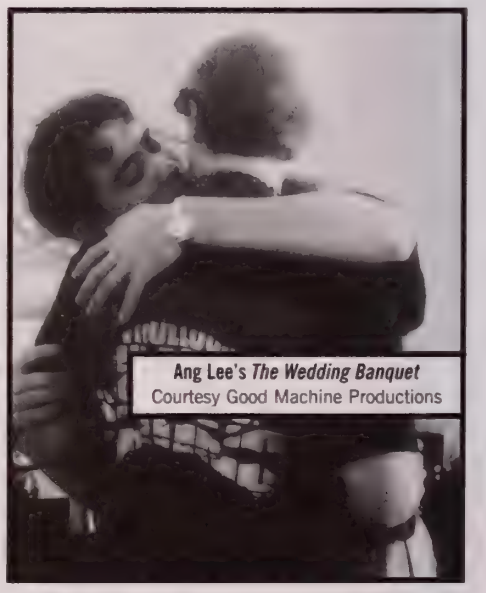
1. High: Work of Marlon Riggs. Low: Shift of NEA funding to the states.

2. The work of feminist film artists.

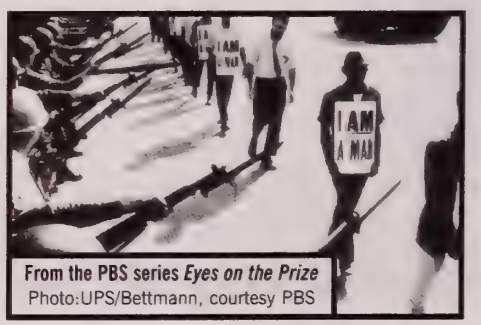
Karen Cooper
Executive director, Film Forum, New York, NY

1. High: That a number of independently made features and feature-length documentaries, including *She's Gotta Have It*, *Down by Law*, *Roger & Me*, and Barbara Kopple's *American Dream*, have "broken out" and played nationwide to considerable critical acclaim. Low: that so many independents strive to become part of the studio system instead of developing a more individualized point-of-view.

2. Taking a long-range view, I would select *Eyes on the Prize*, a multi-part history of the civil rights movement using archival footage and inter-



Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*
Courtesy Good Machine Productions



From the PBS series *Eyes on the Prize*
Photo:UPS/Bettmann, courtesy PBS



Alan Berliner's *Intimate Stranger*
Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

views that update this material. I believe its influence has yet to occur—that it is an invaluable record of our racial history, which will someday receive the appreciative attention it deserves.

George Stoney
Professor of film & television, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University

1. High: When Congress authorized ITVS funding. Low: When we found out the powers that be at PBS were determined to see that the scheme would not succeed.

2. *Eyes on the Prize* and the subsequent productions by Blackside, Inc., which proved that blacks and whites could work collaboratively, creating the most notable documentaries of the decade.

Jill Godmilow
Independent filmmaker & charter member, AIVF

1. High: Success of *The Wedding Banquet*. Low: Defunding of arts on both the state and federal levels.

2. Nonlinear editing systems.

Whit Stillman
Feature filmmaker

1. High: The emergence at the 1989 Sundance Festival and subsequent recognition of *True Love* by Nancy Savoca and *sex, lies & videotape* by Steven Soderbergh, which began two great independent careers and probably led to the financing of dozens of other independent projects. Low: Locally, it was the studio production drought of 1990, which led to the migration of so much craft talent to Los Angeles.

2. Perhaps it is a few months on the outside of the 10-year bracket, but *Stranger Than Paradise* showed that a film could be beautifully strange and true to itself, very funny, and find an audience big enough to let the filmmaker do other strange films.

I think the mainstream success of Ken Burns' *The Civil War* has obscured for some people what an achievement it was as independent filmmaking. The success of this project, like that of *sex, lies* in fiction films, will surely enable others to make their films.

Ralph Arlyck
Independent filmmaker

1. High: When Congress created ITVS and said, in effect, to the PTV system, "These people (independents) are a vital part of what you do and you *must* deal with them." Low: When the VHS purchase price for Hollywood features dropped to $39.95 (or $19.95). This meant that in a field that used to sustain us partially ("educational distribution"), we suddenly had to compete with mass-market, pre-advertised "product." Guess which won.

2. Marlon Riggs' *Tongues Untied*, a beautiful tape that freaked out public television and made independents understand New York City and San Francisco are not the whole country, and Michael Moore's *Roger & Me* for the way it crossed over. For artistic achievement, Alan Berliner's *Intimate Stranger*. Alan the Alchemist turns hum-drum family records into poetry.

Brian O'Doherty
Media arts program director, National Endowment for the Arts

1. High: The MacArthur Foundation's continuing commitment to independent film and video in both grants to organizations and to productions. Low: The closing of Film in the Cities.

2. Every year brings a surprise, which is therefore an influence. Who can compare *Last Night at*



Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*
Courtesy Film Forum

the Alamo to *Tongues Untied* to *Shoot for the Contents?* That's what makes this field so exciting—just when you think you've seen *the* definitive documentary/narrative/experimental work that outshines all others, someone comes along and breaks all the conventions to redefine the genre.

Gene Youngblood Social critic & media theorist

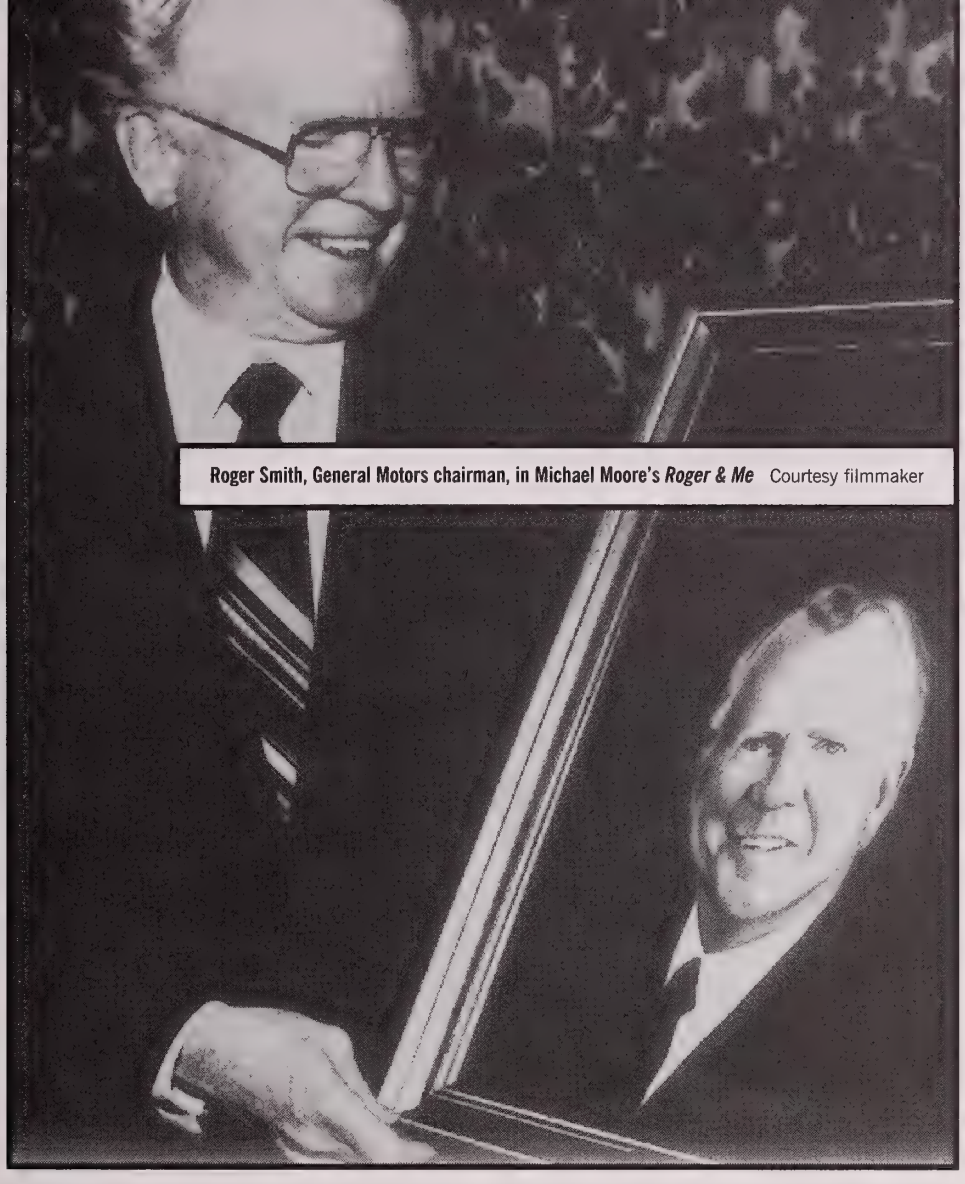
1. High: The most important development of the last decade on the cultural front has been the politics of representation—a heightened awareness that when we say "media" we mean the social construction of reality. Technologically, it has been the convergence of digital media and the emergence of desktop audiovisual production. But neither of these developments is particularly exciting to me without a fundamental transformation in the nature of what we used to call "distribution" and should now call public conversation. Rhetoric about enfranchised margins and 500 channels not withstanding, the Broadcast speaks with a single ideologic voice to more receivers around the world than ever before. The global village is rapidly becoming a company town. The challenge for moving image workers during the last 20 years has been access to resources of production; from now on the challenge is access to channels of alternative conversation. We must secede from the Broadcast State, but to do that there must be another territory to occupy, another electronic world to live in. Alternative media workers must stop thinking of "telecommunication" as something different and apart from what we're about. Henceforth, our destiny rides on the infobahn.



Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It* Courtesy 40 Acres and a Mule



Daughters of the Dust
Courtesy Film Forum



Roger Smith, General Motors chairman, in Michael Moore's *Roger & Me* Courtesy filmmaker

Lindsay Law
President, American Playhouse

1. High: The success of independent films such as *Blood Simple*, *sex, lies & videotape*, *The Crying Game*, and *The Wedding Banquet*, which proved the economic viability of independent cinema. Low: The plethora of bad movies financed by the then-burgeoning field of home video, which took screens away from more deserving films.

2. *sex, lies & videotape*.

Rea Tajiri
Film- and videomaker

1. High: ITVS finally taking off: It was a start in attempting to get independent work seen by everyone. Yet it is still very competitive and hard to be included. The community worked really hard to establish ITVS. Low: Cutbacks in NYSCA funding and censorship in the NEA.

2. *Sans Soleil* and *Daughters of the Dust*.

Bill Horrigan
Curator, media arts, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH

1. I'm made nervous, or more nervous, by having to cite any "high" or any "low." I guess everything that happens under the sun is both better and worse. But in terms of true change being wrought, the culture of cable (and its handmaiden, the VCR) seems to me to have transformed virtually everything. The world of today's happy man is not the same world as 1984's happy man.

2. Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*, Derek Jarman's *The Last of England*, Leslie Thornton's *Peggy and Fred in Hell*, AIDS-mandated media.

Ayoka Chenzira
Producer/director/writer & assistant professor of film and video, City College, New York

1. Highs: New technologies such as Pixelvision, Hi8, and the return of super 8; the number of video clubs that are being formed across the



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Handsworth Songs Courtesy Black Audio Film Collective

country; gay and lesbian stories. Lows: The shrinking dollar; the thought that so many people who fought for real independent media went Hollywood.

2. *Daughters of the Dust* because it proved: a) there is a real audience for black women's cinema; b) the ignorance and arrogance of a power structure that said nobody would see this film; c) how little white America knows about black culture and therefore about itself; d) how unwilling white America (including "liberals" both in and out of the film community) is to consider anything [about the black community] that isn't urban, gangster, violent, or pathological.

Richard Leacock Filmmaker-turned-videographer

1. Low: My last drunk, 10 years ago. High: Retiring with a pension from MIT. Moving to Paris because I think they understand me. Meeting and falling in love with Valerie Lalonde. Working with her exclusively on video-8. Yes, I have had it with film. I love video-8! I can do what I want and to hell with television producers and to hell with funding panels! Make movies. It's good for you.

2. *Les Oeufs à la Coque* de Richard Leacock.

Julia Reichert Independent filmmaker & distributor, New Day Films

1. High: The moment we won the battle for ITVS. Low: Attacks on freedom of speech by Wildmon, Helms, Bush, et al. We still live under their shadow. The high and low developments were the popularization of the how-to video cassette. The death knell for one kind of distribution of independent media, the birth of another. The twilight of one kind of survival of indies, the opening up of another.

2. Single most influential piece of media: the camcorder footage of the Rodney King beating. This slammed our racial crisis, class chasm, and crisis of authority into the faces of the American public. The single most influential TV event: First two hours of *Twin Peaks* signalled a new generation was taking over. Single most influential documentary: *The Thin Blue Line*. Its progeny are everywhere, from *60 Minutes* to my students' films. Second place: *Roger & Me*. Single most influential fiction feature: *She's Gotta Have It*. A brash young guy from Brooklyn awakened hundreds of other outcasts—be they gay, African American, Asian, lesbian, Latino, female, or just young and restless—to the possibility of making films in their own voices, and to strategies of working with no money. Spike's children are everywhere.

Louis Massiah Independent film- & video-maker and director, Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA

1. I'm seeing three major positive developments in the last decade. I hesitate to say high points, because we're still a long way from the zenith. (a) The economic descent experienced by many urban neighborhoods during the so-called boom period of the 1980s occasioned a need for

new modes of expression. Out of this situation has come *the growth of community media*, that is, video produced by members of community groups, which documents issues and concerns and speaks to neighbors and the larger community. Community media, which may have its roots in documentation by housing organizers and AIDS activists, has created both a broader purpose and an aesthetic for independent media; (b) Technologically, the *introduction and availability of Hi8 camcorders* and the possibilities created by these cameras has been largely responsible for the proliferation of independent media production in the last five years. Lightweight and relatively low-cost production equipment has allowed a range of individuals to use video as a means of expression; (c) *The growth of media arts organizations, production companies, and programming venues operated and controlled by people of color* has brought more people into the field and has also had an enriching effect on the purpose, practice, and aesthetics of film- and videomaking.

As for low points, every day has its struggles: AIDS slowing down and killing people; censorship; bureaucracies uncomfortable with freedom; poverty; lack of cable access; confusion.

2. First, Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* has significantly raised the ante for what we can expect from film and has taken film practice into the transcendental realm. Though I'm used to having music provide a spiritual experience, *Daughters* let me know that film had that possibility as well. Second, Black Audio Film Collective's *Handsworth Songs*, directed by John Akomfrah, was a wake-up call to documentary makers that the modes of storytelling and form of filmmaking must be as engaging as subject. Third, commercially, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It* has been the pass key that opened Hollywood to African American makers and other makers of color.

Geoffrey Gilmore
Director,
Sundance Film Festival

1. I don't think there's one high or low point that can define the evolution of the independent field over the last decade. The changes have been cumulative, although I believe the flow in general has been an upward one; independent films have gotten more visibility, gained critical recognition, and garnered many awards. Theatrical distribution has also changed dramatically. Major independent films can be released to 800 theaters rather than to eight. Also, there's much more information available now, through organizations such as AIVF and the IFP, on financing independent works. The Sundance Festival has also changed dramatically since its inception in 1985 when 500 people attended. This year, attendance reached 10,000. The festival has a multitude of purposes. It is not just a door to the marketplace.

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2. The field is part of a spectrum. I hesitate to say the works of one director or distribution company are archetypal. What's considered accessible has broadened slightly over the last decade, but while less commercial works may be critically received, they are often difficult to market.

Larry Daressa
Co-director,
California Newsreel

1. High: Creation of the ITVS. Low: Performance of ITVS.

2. *America's Funniest Home Videos*

Chris Spotted Eagle
Filmmaker & cultural worker

1. High: AIVF and independents rallying to have legislation for ITVS. Low: Right wing cutting federal funds for artists and its efforts to censor artistic expression.

2. My own work, *The Great Spirit Within the Hole* (1983) is a standard used for advocates of indian prisoners. It's also great that Marlon Riggs' *Tongues Untied* was done and got out.

Faith Hubley
Animator

1. High: ITVS gave me a grant for my film *Tall Time Tales*. Before that I had been practically unfundable because I'm an animator. I finished the film on time. Low: It still hasn't been on the air. It's not enough to get funding. We need to have a place on the menu.

2. Everybody who finishes a film is a hero or a heroine because it's so damn difficult.

Sherry Millner &
Ernie Larsen
Video producers

1. High: The astounding transformation of the energies of feminist media work—which passionately tested the metaphor and everyday reality of self-respresentation—into the overflowing energies of queer media, with its liberatory investment in representations of the vulnerability of the human body. Low: Censorship produced a dire outline of the limits imposed on cultural expression. Yet that outline itself was taken up by artists as an invaluable diagnosis of the current state of morbidity of the social body.

THE INDEPENDENT

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BY MITCH ALBERT



The life of a late Native American Ponca drummer and head singer is the focus of *Harry Buffalohead: Singer of Traditions*. Photo: Wayne Dela Roche

ACH DU LIEBER! **Little Lieutenant** (6 min., 16mm), A reminiscence of Weimar life and times directed by Henry Hills and Sally Silvers, centers around a John Zorn arrangement of Kurt Weill's song, "Little Lieutenant of the Loving God." Foreground choreography by Silvers interacts with rear screen projections reflecting themes from the song's interpretation: cabarets, industrial wastescapes, moody photographs, battle newsreels, and more. A series of 30 scenes matched closely to the arrangement makes for an elaborate music video. *Little Lieutenant*, Henry Hills, 303 E. 8th St., #6-R, NY, NY 10009; (212) 473-0615 (ph./fax).

Longtime documentarian David Sutherland labels his new work—a warts-and-all look at a blind woman and the people in her life—a "soapumentary." The subject of **Out of Sight** (87 min., 35mm) is 34-year-old Diane Starin, who breaks horses and hearts on a California ranch. Sutherland's intimate access to Diane's life—which includes heart-to-hearts with her best friend, mother, stepfather, and dying lover—results in a portrait free of the weltschmerz and maudlin typing normally associated with cinema's handicapped protagonists. The film also snags the nuances of the Northern-Cal cowboy life, relationships replete with alcohol, infidelity, and the drive for personal financial independence. *Out of Sight*, David Sutherland Productions, Inc., 141 Plymouth Rd., Newton, MA 02161; (617) 965-0285; fax: 244-5541.

Called the "most overlooked folk music in the world," Native American music—as embodied by one of the Ponca tribe's most respected proponents and practitioners—gets looked at in **Harry Buffalohead: Singer of Traditions** (feature-length,16mm). Filmmakers Tim Caster and Elizabeth Rich were granted unrestricted access to the 115th Ponca Powwow in Oklahoma three years ago. They focused on the life story of the late Harry Buffalohead, who sat at the Ponca drum as head singer until his death 16 months after the film's completion. The film explores the man and his music within the context of Native American life on the Southern Plains, both in Buffalohead's recollections and now. Buffalohead's grandfather apparently told the young Harry to watch for "a story about yourself, a legend" that would be told and left for posterity. Perhaps this film represents the fulfillment of that prophecy.

Caster and Rich, who received NEA funding for the production, are seeking additional funds to complete the final stages of postproduction. *Harry Buffalohead: Singer of Traditions*, West One Films, Inc., 222 W. 23rd St. #127, NY, NY 10011; (212) 533-3589.

State of Emergency: Inside the Los Angeles Police Department (28 min., video) investigates police brutality in Angel City. Producers Liz Canner and Julia Meltzer, in collaboration with Michael Zinzun of the Coalition Against Police Abuse, also examine cop racism, changes in the post-Darryl Gates force, and community solutions for reform. LAPD officers and their supervisors are interviewed. A study guide is available along with the video. *State of Emergency: Inside the Los Angeles Police Department*, Hourglass Productions, 6022 Wilshire Blvd., #201, Los Angeles, CA 90036; (310) 275-6531.

Bound by the Wind (57- & 87-min., video) by producer/director David L. Brown focuses on the global human impact of nuclear testing. The principal subjects are "downwinders" from the U.S., the Marshall Islands, and the former U.S.S.R., who have been directly affected by nuclear testing and have become devoted activists in the international campaign to achieve a comprehensive test ban. The film is timely in the wake of recent revelations on secret radiation experiments by the U.S Dept. of Energy. *Bound by the Wind*, Energon Films, 274 Santa Clara St., Brisbane, CA 94005; (415) 468-7469.

The title of Top Garbage Eater is hotly contested in **Fairgrounds** (90 min., 16mm), the story of carny sideshow Phil and his conniving assistant Mister. No less ambitious is Effany, a local girl for whom Phil is a Way Out. David Wells directed this study of sincerity and manipulation set in the truck stops, bars, and barns of the American Midwest, which was recently mixed and is festival-ready. *Fairgrounds*, Crooked Mouth Productions, 1047 Bush St., ste. #12, San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 771-6567.

And speaking of sideshows, Coney Island has seen a few in its time. Jimmy Garland's **Sideshows By the Seashore** (27 min., 3/4") cold-plunges alongside members of The Polar Bears, a hardy bunch whose club has been swimming in winter's waters since 1903. The film, which premiered in March on the Discovery Channel, also takes stock of the only-in-Brooklyn community that populates the seashore in winter. *Sideshows By the Seashore*, Jimmy Garland (212) 255-1239.

The Eames—the chair, right? Chair designers? Well, right. Not to mention groundbreaking contributors to architecture and industrial design, as well as prodigious filmmakers. Charles and Ray Eames made over 85 short films they considered less art than "tools for for various ongoing Eames Office projects." In **The Films of Charles and Ray Eames** (177 min. total, 16mm to VHS), coproduced by Eames daughter, Lucia Eames Demetrios, and her son, documentarian Eames Demetrios, the Eames films have been restored and preserved using the latest in digital-editing technology. The collection has been released in four volumes on videotape, including the award-winning *Powers of Ten. The Films Of Charles and Ray Eames*, Pyramid Film & Video, PO Box 1048, Dept. HV, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1048; (800) 421-2304.

Ah, the pain of creative block—who wouldn't kill to relieve it? In **Still Life** (35 min., video), directed by 17-year-old Sascha Paladino of the Performing Arts High School, a young, talented, but uninspired painter discovers that murder will do the trick. As she pursues that "darkly comic path," the artist wonders: "Is inspiration worth the price of human life?" Hell of a question... *Still Life*, Young Pictures, 37 Riverside Dr., NY, NY 10023; (212) 873-4781.

Like everything else, the martial arts are a metaphor for life. But, then, different situations require appropriate metaphors. **Inside-Out** (90 min., 35mm), directed by Stephane Zerbib, explores the parallels between the relationship of two aikido partners and the dissolution of the relationship between one of the partners and his lover. *Inside-Out*, Cyclops Pictures, 245 8th Ave., ste. 199, NY, NY 10011; (212) 206-0008; 969-8554 (fax).

En route from Chicago is a film about a lost generation that "can reference Osip Mandelstam and Stephen Jay Gould but are unable to find a niche in America's Workplace." Just don't say 'Generation X'. Writer/director/producer Timothy Bennett, 23, began production on **Eulogy for a Love Affair** (feature-length, 35mm) in April. *Eulogy for a Love Affair*, Chickenface Productions, 6165 N. Winthrop, ste. 306, Chicago, IL 60660; (312) 973-3846.

Festivals

BY KATHRYN BOWSER



THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER, DIRECTOR OF THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. AS SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE..

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ASPEN FILMFEST, Sept. 28-Oct. 2. Fest is celebration of "diverse & exciting" ind. films, incl. newest in feature, foreign, doc & short subject films. Entries selected on "concept & execution, originality & creativity, style & technical excellence." Features & shorts (under 10 min.) completed after 6/1/93 eligible. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 10. Contact: Mary Mullane, PO Box 8910, Aspen, CO 81612; (303) 925-6882; fax: 9570.

COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 25-26. Competitive nontheatrical fest now in 42nd annual edition offers Chris Awards in several area divisions w/ about 10 cats in each, as well as Bronze Plaques, Certificate of Honorable Mention, President's Award, Edgar Dale Award, Benjamin Franklin Award, Christopher Columbus Award & Narrative Screenwriting Award. Entries should have been completed in previous 3 yrs. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fees: $40-$125. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Joyce K. Long, awards administrator, Columbus International Film & Video Festival, 5701 North High St., ste. 204, Worthington, OH 43085; (614) 841-1666.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-20, CO. Invitational & noncompetitve fest, now in 17th yr., screens more than 100 films from US & world. Sections incl. Contemporary Cinema (new int'l fiction works), doc, New Directors Showcase, short subjects & live-action & animated children's films. Award to US ind. film artist. Entry fee: $25 ($10 students). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Ron Henderson, Denver International Film Festival, 999 18th St., ste. 1820, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 298-8223; fax: 0209.

HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 27-31, IN. Fest's purpose is to "recognize & honor filmmakers whose work explores human journey by artistically expressing hope & respect for positive values of life." Cats: Dramatic, children's (live-action or animation), doc, student, foreign-language films. Crystal Heart Awards & $100,000 in prizes will be awarded. Minimum of $20,000 will be presented to each feature & $5,000 to each short. Deadline: June 15. For info, contact: Jeffrey L. Sparks, artistic director, Heartland Film Fest, 613 N. East St., Indianapolis, IN 46202; (317) 464-9405.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL & VIDEOFEST, Oct. 6-16, CA. Now in 17th yr, fest screens narrative, doc, animated, shorts, & experimental films & videos. Emphasis is on new work not widely seen, esp. Northern CA premieres. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Zoe Elton, Mill Valley Film Festival & Videofest, 38 Miller Ave., ste. 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256; fax: 8606.

MIX: NEW YORK LESBIAN & GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL/DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TELEVISION'S LOOKOUT 94 VIDEO FESTIVAL/MIX BRASIL 4: FESTIVAL DAS MANIFESTACOES DA SEXUALIDADE, November, NY. Cooperative call for entries from 3 fests which "have personal & vital investment in continuing to bring to the fest new audiences, curators & makers, particularly lesbians & gays of color, immigrant communities, lesbian & gay youth & other groups who have been traditionally excluded from media circuit...MIX aims to interrogate familiar terms used in articulating sexualities, to explore notions of hybridity, mescla, synchretism, mestizaje, samanvay, etc. & to propel the internationalization of queer communities, dialogues & debates." Experimental film/video fest welcomes submissions of films, videos, installations & media performance from "every imaginable" genre that experiments w/ moving image. Lookout 94 plans to "celebrate lesbian & gay culture & its manifestations in TV media" incl. queer TV shows, PSA's & music videos. MIX Brasil 94 (in cooperation w/ Suzy Capo Sobral & Andre Fischer) will tour cities throughout Brazil, beginning in Sao Paulo, from Oct. 11-16. Deadline: June 15. Contact: MIX, c/o Anthology Film Archives, 32 2nd Ave., NY, NY 10003; (212) 925-5883.

NEW YORK EXPOSITION OF SHORT FILM & VIDEO, Nov., NY. 29th annual competitive fest for ind. short film/video. 3-day fest w/ sidebar screenings & panel discussions. Award certificates presented in fiction, doc, animation & experimental, plus Eastman Kodak cash prize. Selected films will be screened for NY area distributors & exhibitors. Accepting Canadian & int'l entires. New York Expo is newly reorganized for 1994 w/ new director in association w/ New School for Social Research & NY Film/Video Council. Formats: 16mm, 3/4" video. Preview on 1/2" video. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Robert Withers, NY Expo, Box 330, 532 LaGuardia Place, NY, NY 10012; (212) 505-7742.

NOMAD VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, WA. Touring venue (Port Townsend, Seattle, Portland & San Francisco) featuring "noncommercial, alternative, & artistically challenging" work by filmmakers & videographers who utilize, edit &/or transfer to VHS, SVHS or Hi-8 video formats. No themes, prizes, or entry fees. Cats: docs, shorts (15 min. max), features (60 min. max). Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Nomad Video Festival, c/o Antero Alli, PO Box 161, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

REEL AFFIRMATIONS 4: DC'S 4TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF GAY & LESBIAN FILMS, Oct. 13-23, DC. "Fifth largest gay & lesbian film fest in US" seeks films & videos by &/or about lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender people. Features, shorts, docs, experimental & animated works accepted. Entry fee: $10. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2" only. Deadline: July 1. Contact: One In Ten, c/o NPMA, 1555 Connecticut Ave. NW, ste. 200, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 986-1119; fax: (202) 462-9043.

SANTA BARBARA LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 10-13, CA. Fest accepts film & video works of all genres & lengths. Format: 16mm & 35mm, 1/2" video; preview on 1/2" cassette. Audience award for best feature (over 60 min.), best short & best video. Incl. bio or resumé w/ address & phone, description or synopsis of entry plus technical info: length, format, gauge, credits & prod. stills. People of color encouraged to apply. Entry fee: $10, plus self-addressed, stamped return mailer. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Kim Summerfield, Santa Barbara Lesbian and Gay Film Fest, PO Box 21653, Santa Fe, CA 93121; fax: (805) 963-9086.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 2-5, CO. Selective fest, now in 21st yr, held Labor Day wknd, programs new US & foreign features & docs & attracts serious cross section of media & professional community. Features & shorts accepted. Entry fee: $35 under 30 min., $55 over 30 min. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Bill Pence/Stella Pence, Telluride Film Festival, Nat'l Film Preserve, Box 1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255; fax: 5938.

TENTH ANNUAL FILM ARTS FESTIVAL, Nov. 2-6, CA. Fest, one of Bay Area's premiere showcases of locally produced ind. media work, is thematically organized celebration & exploration of recent & historical media work by Northern California makers. Ind. films & videos of any length & genre by makers residing (or made while residing) in Northern Calfornia (Monterey to Oregon border) eligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4" video (1/2" VHS acceptable for preview. Entry fee: $5; honoraria paid for works shown. Deadline: July 29. Contact: For entry form, send SASE to: Lissa Gibbs, Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

TROUBADOURS FESTIVAL, Sept. 1-4, CA. 1st annual film/video fest "dedicated to showcase nonprofit, non-competitive, ind. projects by Christian artists." Fest seeks projects "created by Christians of any background about Christ, Christians, Christianity & any aspect of Christian life or culture: Diverse, nontraditional, unconventional, alternative, & investigative perspectives encouraged." All genres accepted, incl. narrative, doc, educational, shorts, avant-garde, experimental, students & others. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 1/2". Deadline:

July 31. Contact: Bret Lutz, Cathedral Productions (re: Fest), 171 Langton St., #5, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-5201.

FOREIGN

CONTRASTING WORLDS: REFLECTIONS ON THE MEDITERRANEAN INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ETHNOLOGICAL FILM & VIDEO, Nov. 6-12, Spain. Goal of noncompetitive fest is to showcase film & video prods that focus on cultural, economic, political, social, ethnic & ecological issues of Mediterranean societies. Organizing committee encourages social scientists & audiovisual professionals to submit ethnographic films & videos, fiction films, docs for TV, research or experimental works, works in progress (max. 15 min.). Program has 2 parts: official section & "Videos à la Carte." Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Mundos en Contraste, Centro de Investigaciones Etnologicas "Angel Ganivet,"Cuesta de los Molinos 18008, Granada, Spain; tel: 34 58 22 02 57; fax: 34 58 22 48 90.

CORK FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-9, Ireland. In its 39th yr as major noncompetitive showcase for world cinema & Irish film art, fest is particularly interested in art of short film & social, cultural & political docs. Entries accepted in cats of feature films for the cinema; feature films & programs for TV; doc films; short films; & contemporary b/w films (competitive section only). Program also incl. "Focus On" devoted to young filmmakers, seminars, exhibitions, schools' program & fest club. Screenings take place in Cork Opera House & Triskel Arts Centre. Entries must be recent prods not previously screened or broadcast in Ireland. No entry fee, but enclose 10 stamped Int'l Reply Coupons for return of preview cassette. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 1. Contact: Anne O'Sullivan/Donal Sheehan, Cork Film Festival, Hatfield House, Tobin St., Cork, Ireland; tel: 353 21 271711; fax: 353 21 275945.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, UK. Fest director Sheila Whitaker & deputy director Rosa Bosch will again work w/ FIVF to collect & ship films & videos for selection in 6th yr of one of Europe's largest forums for US ind. prod. This fest, in 38th yr., is invitational, noncompetitive & particularly interested in children's films for program prior to fest. Sections: Electronic Image; Art & Experiment; Animation (all of which may incl. US inds); British, French & Italian Panoramas; Africa, Asia & Latin America & children's films. Screening venues incl. National Film Theatre, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon West End & Empire. Attended by large audiences, over 700 buyers & British/int'l media. Entries must be UK premieres. Fiction & docs of all lengths, genres accepted. Fest formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4"; preview on cassette (pref. VHS) only. Entry/handling fee: $25 AIVF members, $30 all others. For info & applications, send SASE or contact: Kathryn Bowser, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Deadline: July 15 through FIVF; Aug. 12 if sent directly to LFF. Fest address: London International Film Festival, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, England; tel: 44 71 815-1322/1323; fax: 44 71 633-0786.

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MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW FILM & VIDEO, October, Canada. Now in 23rd edition, noncompetitive showcase is int'l meeting place for new cinema & video. Special awards, voted on by Québec Film Critics Association & sponsored by Banque Laurentienne: $5,000 for best feature; $1,000 for best short; $2,000 for best video; $3,000 for best doc. Feature length & short drama, fiction videos & film & docs accepted. Entries must be produced 21 mos. prior to fest & unscreened in Québec. Entry fee: $50 (per film/video). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Claude Chamberlan, Festival International du Nouveau Cinema & de la Vidéo de Montréal, 3726, Blvd. St.-Laurent, Montreal, Québec, Canada H2X2V8; tel: (514) 843-4725; fax: (514) 843-4631.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 25-Sept. 5, Canada. Now in 18th yr, this FIAPF-recognized fest boasts annual audiences of nearly 300,000 & programming of over 250 films; held in 13 theatres. Last yr screenings incl. 189 feature films & 153 shorts from 59 countries; 2,500 film industry professionals were accredited, incl. directors, producers, actors, buyers, sellers, journalists, fest reps. Sections: Official Competition(feature films & shorts); Hors Concours (noncompetitive official selection); Turkish Cinema of Today; Latin American Cinema; Cinema of Today: Reflections of Our Time; Cinema of Tomorrow: New Trends; Panorama Canada; TV films. Also Int'l Films, TV & Video Market, Tributes. Awards: Grand Prix of the Americas to best film in competitive feature-length section; Special Grand Prix of the Jury, as well as prizes for Best Director, Best Actor/Actress, Best Screenplay, Best Artistic Contribution; Air Canada Prize for most popular feature film; Public Prize for Best Canadian Feature Film; Ecumenical Prize; Prize of "Federation internationale de la presse cinematographique" (FIPRESCI), & Prix de Montréal awarded for best first film. 2 prizes awarded in short film section. Formats: 70mm, 16mm35mm, 3/4". Deadline: July 8. Contact: Serge Losique or Danièle Cauchard, Montreal World Film Festival, 1455 Blvd. de Maisonneuve W., Montreal, Québec H3G 1M8, Canada; tel: (514) 848-3883; fax:3886.

TORINO INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL/FESTIVAL CINEMA GIOVANI, Nov. 18-26, Italy. Held in Turin, Italy, fest focuses on films made by 1st & 2nd time directors, shorts & feature, as well as films dealing w/ themes relevant to young people (not "kiddie movies"). Competition sections have cash prizes. Entry fee: $15 (payable to Cross Productions). Formats: 35mm, 16mm (no video); preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Deadline: July 31. Contact US rep: Michael Solomon, Cross Productions, 625 Broadway, 12th fl., NY, NY 10012; (212) 777-0557; fax: 0738.

TORONTO FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS, September, Canada. Noncompetitive celebration of film w/ wide ranging program playing to int'l audiences, incl. large press contingent. Major event on fest circuit, w/ many films receiving world & N. American premieres & w/ reputation for programming innovative, alternative, experimental films. More than 200 features from 40 countries participate, incl. over 75 shorts & docs. Cats: Galas (premieres of major new prods); Contemporary World Cinema ("most recent & engaging films" from several countries); Perspective Canada; Edge; Special Presentations;

Midnight Madness; National Cinema & Spotlight. 2-day Trade Forum industry sidebar held during fest. Entries completed after Sept. 1, 1993. Short films must be by Canadian producers. No entry fee. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 8. Contact: Piers Handling, Festival of Festivals, 70 Carlton St., Toronto, Ontario M5B 1L7, Canada; tel: (416) 967-7371; fax: 9477.

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, October, Canada. Founded in 1982, fest is one of N. America's larger int'l film events. Only feature-length films (70 min. & over) that have not been screened commercially or broadcast in British Columbia eligible. Sections: Dragons and Tigers: the Cinemas of East Asia, Canadian Images, Cinema of Our Time, Nonfiction Features; After Midnight. About 200 films representing 40 countries shown. Awards: Air Canada for Most Popular Film, decided by audience ballot. National Film Board of Canada Awards (cash prizes). Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Alan Franey, Vancouver Int'l Film Festival, 1008 Homer St., ste. 410, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6B 2M1; tel: (604) 685-0260; fax: 688-8221.

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IND. PROD. COMPANY seeks scripts under 15 min. All genres considered. Send copyrighted scripts w/ SASE to: Ndolo FIlms, PO Box 20210, NY, NY 10009.

PRODUCER Martha Davies seeking crew for *Amazonia*, Roberto Monticello's sequel to award winner, *Carribean*. Coproduced by Brazil's TV Globo. Feature about couple working out troubles. J. Cuevas, c/o Roberto Monticello, PO Box 372, NY, NY 10014.

STAFF & CREW for Roberto Monticello's *The Rights of Others*, syndicated TV series about human- & animal-rights activists. Also, editors for recently completed *Realities*. Lisa Landis, producer, c/o R. Monticello, PO Box 372, NY, NY 10014. Union/nonunion.

SCREENPLAY CONTENTS (all 35 of them) offer $1.4 million in cash, recognition, publicity, agents, fellowships, etc. Reap these benefits! Writer's Aide, 1685 S. Colorado, Box 237-C Denver, CO 80222; (303) 430-4839.

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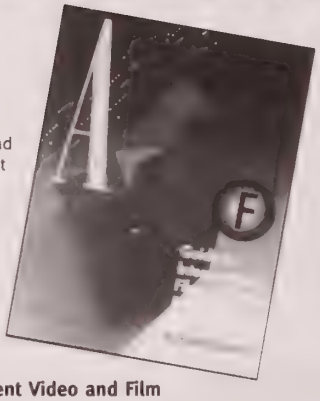
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AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals
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The 3rd edition of FIVF's bestseller is a completely indexed and easy-to-read compendium of over 600 international film and video festivals, with contact information, entry regulations, dates and deadlines, categories, accepted formats, and much more. The *Guide* includes information on all types of festivals: small and large, specialized and general, domestic and foreign.

An important reference source which belongs in the library of every media professional: independent producers, distributors, festival directors, programmers, curators, exhibitors.





AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors
A Publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film
edited by Kathryn Bowser
184 pages, $19.50

A must-read for independent film and video-makers searching for the right distributor. *The AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors* presents handy profiles of over 150 commercial and nonprofit distributors, practical information and company statistics on the type of work handled, primary markets, relations with producers, marketing and promotion, foreign distribution and contacts. Fully indexed, with additional contact lists of cable/satellite services and public television outlets, as well as a bibliography. This is the best compendium of distribution and information especially tailored for independent producers available.

Alternative Visions
Distributing Independent Video in a Home Video World
by Debra Franco
a co-publication of AFI and FIVF, 181 pages
$12.95/$9.95 AIVF and AFI member price

Video cassettes and video stores have changed forever the economics of distribution for all moving image media—including alternative films and tapes. What has happened to institutional markets? What promise does home video distribution really hold for non-mainstream work? Chapters cover selling to schools, libraries, and individual consumers. Includes detailed case studies of the marketing of eight independent works. Essential reading for anyone with an interest in home video distribution.



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FESTIVAL BUREAU SERVICES

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.We also work directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, or serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors.

INFORMATION SERVICES

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to the field. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

NETWORKING

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

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Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independents, AIVF is there working for you.

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We have a large inventory of media books, as well as publishing our own titles on festivals, distribution, and foreign production resources. Members receive substantial discounts.

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- ❑ The AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals ($29.95/ $24.95 member price)
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The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

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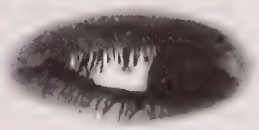
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Conferences • Seminars

CENTER FOR NEW TV in Chicago offers workshops in all aspects of beginning & intermediate video prod., multimedia & telecomputing. Taught by professionals in the video arts. For more info, call (312) 951-6868.

DCTV offers technical workshops for summer. Offerings incl.: Basic TV Prod., Camera Seminar, S-VHS & 3/4" Editing, AMIGA Titling & Graphics, Intro. to Doc. Register by sending $10 downpayment to: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (914) 552-8760.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE ON MEDIA EDUCATION, on media literacy concepts, methods, resources & techniques, will be held July 31 to Aug. 5. K-12 teachers, administrators, educators & media professsionals are encouraged to attend. For appl. & more info, contact: Institute on Media Education, 339 Gutman Library, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA 02138; (617) 495-3572.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN's continuing studies program announces summer intensives for artists & designers (June-Aug.) providing professional development for graphic designers, photographers, art educators & other professional artists. For more info, contact: Beth Giles or Lisa Deahlin (612) 874-3778, 3765.

RAZZA DIGITAL, w/ Apple, Radius, Sony, Adobe & others, is holding summer educational symposium series on digital video in Chicago—June 15, 16; Atlanta—June 21, 22; Dallas—July 6,7; Seattle—August 10, 11. Series provides in-depth discussion & presentations relating to the capture, manipulation & output of video imagery from Mac. For resellers & consumers. Contact: Debra Cains (714) 261-7690.

VIDEO EXPO/IMAGE WORLD, expo & seminar program for video prod., computer animation, graphics, multimedia presentation, digital imaging & prepress imaging professionals, will be held Sept. 19 to 23 at Jacob Javits Convention Center in NYC. For more info, call: Janet Vargas, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc. (914) 328-9157.

Films • Tapes Wanted

21ST CENTURY, live interactive variety show on WMFP Boston, seeks videotapes of 5 min. or less that interact w/ show's text. For more info, contact: Richard Washbourne (415) 587-2296 or (415) 241-0664.

ALIVE TV is now accepting submissions of new films & videos. Experimental films, performance pieces, animation, narrative, shorts & essay works unique in content or style desired. Preference placed on work under 1/2 hr. *Alive TV* tries to be wake-up call to mainstream media (& PBS). Please watch program on local PBS station & only submit work that seems in sync w/ our goals. Help us survive as 1 of last non-mainstream programs on network TV. Send work on 1/2" or 3/4" w/ filmmaker's bio & film bio (awards, distributors, etc.) to: Neil Sieling, exec. producer, *Alive TV*, KTCA, 172 E. 4th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

ART IN GENERAL seeks works in all visual media for exhibitions/installations for 1994-1995 season. Submit resumé, entry form & SASE. For more info, contact: Art in General, 79 Walker St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION, seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS accepts features, shorts, animated, experimental, or docs of exceptional quality for Cinematheque program. Student works not accepted. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Ron Beattie, Center for Contemporary Arts, 291 E. Barcelona Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENTS seeks film & video shorts (under 20 min.) in all genres, formats for D.C. "ind. showcase" program. Possible deferred payment. Send VHS or 3/4" copy (returnable w/ SASE) to: 1812 Ingleside Terrace N.W., ste #5, Washington D.C. 20010; (202) 232-5934.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

THE EDGE, Denver-based media collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres considered. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), award-winning cable-access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred. No nudity.) Videos credited. Tapes returned. Mail to: Fem TV, PO Box 66604, Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, ste. 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10112.

FILMS/VIDEOS/SCRIPTS wanted by ind. prod. company. Seek work by new artists & seasoned makers. All genres reviewed. Deadline: Aug. 3. Send completed work, samples, synopses, scene format, release forms & $25 filing fee to: Bell Warner Films, SF Professional Bldg., ste. 110-114, Boca Raton, FL 33428; fax: (407) 482-1121. Fees paid.

FLICKTURES seeks comedy shorts (under 10 min.) in all comedy styles/genres to air on LA cable access. Future distribution package may provide possible deferred pay. Send submissions (3/4" preferred) & SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods., 572 1/2 S. Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

HOME GIRL PRODUCTIONS, consortium of women filmmakers, seeks home movies from lesbians for possible inclusion in feature length film. Proceeds from film will go to creation of lesbian film fund. Send inquiries or movies to: Home Girl Productions, 662 North Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, Ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW DAY FILMS, ind. media producers working w/ common vision, seeks energetic new members w/ challenging social issue docs for distribution to nontheatrical markets. Deadline: Sept 1. Call (415) 332-2577.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. We are committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit resumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

THE SECOND WAVE, coproduction of Sagebrush Productions (LA/Wyoming) & Women Make Movies (NY), seeks materials on women's movement for series. W/ 4 1-hr. programs covering 30-yr. period from 1960 to 1990, series will present accurate record of events & ideas, dispel myths & examine legacy of unfinished revolution. Individuals interested in making videotaped memoirs of their experiences, thoughts & observations of movement can contact

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WMM for list of questions to guide video sessions. Those w/o access to videotaping equipment may contact WMM for info about equipment access in their region. Archival materials, incl. home movies, still photos, posters & other graphics, slides of artwork & tapes of women's music also being sought. To submit material, or for additional info regarding series, contact: Terry Lawler, WMM, 462 Broadway, ste. 500, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606; 2052 (fax).

TV 2000, TV pilot, seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, or call (215) 895-2927.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, manager of broadcast projects & acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2" , 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

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VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris (612) 341-0755.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for $500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis within one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

HUGH M. HEFNER FIRST AMENDMENT AWARDS, established in 1979 by the Playboy Foundation, is designed to educate the public about First Amendment issues & to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to enhance & protect rights of Americans. Nominees traditionally have come from print & broadcast journalism, eudcation, publishing, law, government, arts & entertainment industries. Past winners incl. syndicated cartoonist Jules Feiffer & president of Gold Mountain Entertainment Danny Goldberg. Each winner will receive $5,000 in cash and plaque. Deadline for submitting nominations: June 6. Winners announced in Sept. Contact: The Playboy Foundation, 680 N. Lake Shore Dr., Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 751-8000.

IDA 10TH ANNUAL DOC AWARDS COMPETITION. Eligibility: Docs completed between Jan. 1, 1993, & May 30, 1994. Any length. Format: 3/4" or 1/2" VHS NTSC preferred. Fee: $50 IDA members, $70 nonmembers. Deadline: June 30. Ship entries w/ required form, synopsis & credit list, prepaid, to: IDA Awards, 1551 S. Robern Blvd., Ste. 201, Los Angeles, CA 90035; (310) 284-8422.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES Projects in Media grants support planning, writing, or production of TV & radio programs in humanities intended for general audiences. Collaboration of scholars in humanities w/ experienced producers, writer & directors is required. Endowment has special funding opportunity for doc film series. Eligible applicants are nonprofit institutions & organizations, incl. public TV & radio stations. Deadline: Sept. 14. Call the NEH at (202) 606-8278.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA is accepting grant appls for thesis film projects by students enrolled in accredited film programs. For more info, write: Pamela Signorella, director of administration, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021; (212) 744-3221.

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Memoranda: continued from p. 64

online (as we would the festival and distribution guides, the membership lists, grant info, employment info, and so on). Other uses we envision include teleconferencing and live chat, in addition to the bbs activity we're engaged in now. We very much appreciate member input as we enter this field.

Nothing new to report with America Online: we're still playing the waiting game as far as our own area is concerned. Once they give us the go-ahead, we will announce our permanent keyword online in Abbate Video's bulletin board. If you are new to AIVF or to America Online: once you are on-line, pull down "GO TO" from the menu at the top of the screen, and select "key word"; at the prompt, type abbate (2 "b"s) to access the bulletin board, then select message center, then topics, and finally aivf (at the end). To subscribe to America Online, call (800) 827-6364.

WANTED

One of the things we are asked most frequently by members using our resource library is if we have copies of sample grant applications. We don't, and we're asking filmmakers who have been around the block once, twice, or 100 times to remember how intimidating the whole process seemed at the beginning (and may still now), and to send us copies of successful applications that we can keep on file here to help folks who are just starting out. Of particular use would be NEA, NYSCA, and NEH applications, although private foundations such as MacArthur, Jerome, and Robeson also would be of great help.

Obviously, we recognize that some of this material may be proprietary, such as budgets. You can black out whatever info you don't want other filmmakers to read, or only send project descriptions, bios, and other supplementary materials. Earn some good karma, do a mitzvah, help your fellow members out. Send materials to Pam Calvert at the AIVF office.

DISCOUNT UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that Sound Dimensions Editorial will offer AIVF members a 15-percent discount on transfers, effects, and sound studio services: narration, ADR, Foley, and mixing. Sound Dimensions is at 321 W. 44th Street, #602, NYC; Contact Brian Langman (212) 757-5147.

We are interested in expanding the trade discount program, especially with businesses outside NYC. Call us if you have a business or service you can offer to fellow members at a discount. Also, call if you do a lot of business with a company that might be a good prospect for us to approach; it should offer consistently good service at a competitive price. Please provide a contact name if possible. Call or fax membership director Pamela Calvert at (212) 473-3400; 677-8732 (fax).

MEMBERABILIA

Congratulations to Alan and Susan Raymond, whose documentary *I Am a Promise* won an Oscar at this year's ceremony. Several other AIVF members garnered nominations for **Academy Awards** as well. Andrew Young and Susan Todd's *Children of Fate*, already a winner of the 1993 Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary at **Sundance**, was nominated for Best Documentary Feature. Mark Mori's film *Blood Ties*, about the life and work of photographer Sally Mann, was screened at the Sundance Film Festival before receiving a nod from the Academy. *Defending Our Lives*, a documentary about domestic violence by Margaret Lazarus and Renner Wunderlich, took top honors in the Best Documentary Short Subject category.

Paris Poirier's documentary *Last Call at Maud's*, which focuses on the closing of San Francisco's foremost lesbian haunt, will be cablecast on **Cinemax** in July. She and her partner, Karen Kiss, have set up their own distribution and promotion company for independent mediamakers, Horizon Unlimited (310/392-1239).

Allen Mondell and Cynthia Salzman, Dallas filmmakers and cofounders of Media Projects, Inc., recently received grants totalling $25,000 from **the Harold Simmons Foundation** and **the Hillcrest Foundation** for their video *Smokeless Tobacco: A Spittin' Image*, which will educate students on the dangers of smokeless tobacco.

A screening of Yau Ching's selected works was held recently at **DCTV** in Manhattan.

1993 recipients of the **Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowships** include Debra Chasnoff, Janice Findley, Deborah Hoffman, Judith Kriger, Jesse Lerner, and Janice Tanaka.

Among 16 features and short films shown at the **Gothenberg Film Festival** in Sweden are several works by AIVF members: *I Am A Promise: The Children of Stanton Elementary School* by Alan and Susan Raymond; Kermit Cole's *Living Proof, HIV and the Pursuit of Happines; Family Remains*, a dark comedy by Tamara Jenkins; MOTV (My Own TV), Ayoka Chenzira's bittersweet look at the American dream, Andrew Garrison's film *Night Ride*, John Moritsgu's post-punk *Terminal USA*; *The C Word*, a romantic comedy by Michael Selditch, and *Love After Death* by Robert Pulcini.

AIVF member jesikah maria ross received full funding from the **Davis City Council** to conduct an eight-week Media Arts Education Residency at Dr. Martin Luther King High School.

Among the recipients of the **Princess Grace Foundation**'s annual awards for student filmmaking were Parine Jaddo, Alexandra Sichel, and Katren Cinnore. Olyani Areke received the Film Statuette Award, the highest honor bestowed by the foundation.

Abby Freedman's videotape *La Fleur de l'Age* received a Red Ribbon in Drama from the

American Film and Video Association.

Filmmakers David Zeiger and Eric Mofford recently won a Regional Designation Award from the **Cultural Olympiad of the Atlanta Committee For the Olympic Games.** Their project *Displaced in the New South—Refugees and Immigrants in North Georgia* is a one-hour film documenting the growth of immigrant communities in Georgia during the 1980s.

Van McElwee's *Folded Follies* received honorable mention at the **Film and Arc International Festival for Film and Architecture** in Austria.

Catherine Russo has received two grants, from **The Women's Film Finishing Fund** and the **Association of University Women,** for her production *The Boston Women's History Project.*

Doug Block's *The Heck With Hollywood,* about the struggles of three independent film producers., was recently broadcast on PBS.

Barcelona-based member Marta Balletbo-Coll's film *Intrepidissima* was voted Best Short Film at the last **San Franscisco International Gay and Lesbian Film and Video Contest.**

Leslie Thornton is conducting a workshop for emerging media artists from May through August 1994 at **Film Video Arts, Inc.** in Manhattan.

Paula Mozen's recently completed doc *No Rewind* won the Silver Apple award from **National Educational Film and Video Festival.**

Sarah Perry was among three filmmakers chosen to receive a **Media Alliance Fellowship.**

Jackie Pardon's last completed video, *The Fair,* has been screened at the Royal Academy in Sweden, and both the Great Meadow and Washington Correctional Facilities through Skidmore University's **Without Walls** program.

Producer and writer Mira Reym Binford has completed a new film, *Diamonds in the Snow,* the story of three child survivors of the Holocaust.

Jonathan Berman's *The Shvitz,* a documentary about "the art of sweating" received a Director's Citation from the **Black Maria Film Festival** of Edison, N.J.

AIVF member Helen De Michiel was among the 21 recepients of a grant from the **1993 Diverse Visions Regional Grants Program.**

Bill Lappe, an NYPD narcotics investigator and film student, will be presented with the regional **College T.V. Award** by the **Acadamy of Arts and Sciences** for his drug-horror film *Pusher's Nightmare.*

AIVF member Ellen Bruno won Best Documentary at the 37th San Francisco Internation Film Festival **Golden Gate Awards** for her film *Satya: A Prayer for the Enemy.*

The National Video Resouces Group (NVR) recently announced the award of 11 Independent Distributors Assistance program grants. Among the recipients were Appalshop, Inc., The Cinema Guild, and Electronic Arts Intermix.

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SET IN MOTION: 30 YEARS OF NYSCA SUPPORT OF INDEPENDENTS

The New York State Council on the Arts and AIVF salute one another in an evening of film and video screenings at Lincoln Center. This event closes NYSCA's week-long celebration of 30 years in the field.

When: Thursday, June 9
6:15 pm Video Program: **Tales of War and Peace**
Smothering Dreams (Dan Reeves)
Belchite/South Bronx (Francesco Torres)
History and Memory (Rea Tajiri)
Trouble I've Seen (Philip Mallory Jones)
In the Seed (Veronica Soul/ WNYC Poetry Spots)
8:00 pm Reception
9:00 pm Film Program
Far From Poland (Jill Godmilow)
Where: Walter Reade Theater, Lincoln Center
Price: $5 AIVF & Film Society members*/$7 others

*AIVF members may attend all **Set in Motion** screenings at the discounted price. The series runs June 3-9. Call the Lincoln Center Film Society for full program (212) 875-5610.

COMING JULY 12

CELEBRATE! "WHY I'M STILL AN INDEPENDENT"

Advance reservations are now available for a fast-paced evening of community celebration at the Museum of Modern Art: Albert Maysles, D.A. Pennebaker, Chris Hegedus, Renee Tajima, Faith Hubley, Julia Reichert, William Greaves, Whit Stillman, and a score of other leading lights of the field will each tell "Why I'm Still An Independent." A reception at the Manhattan Club will follow. It's sure to be an evening to remember!

For more information, turn to page 2.

WORKSHOPS

MARK LITWAK, ON LEGAL SELF-DEFENSE FOR WRITERS/FILMMAKERS

In this intensive seminar, filmmakers learn how to anticipate problems before they arise in their negotiations with production and distribution companies and create incentives for companies to live up to their agreements. Participants learn what remedies are available to enforce their rights in the event of an unresolvable dispute. Course handouts include 100+ pages of useful contracts, checklists, forms, and materials. Mark Litwak is an entertainment attorney, teacher, and author of *Reel Power, The Struggle for Influence and Success in the New Hollywood* and the soon-to-be-published *Dealmaking in the Film and Television Industry*. Advance registration required.

When: Saturday, June 11, 10:00 am - 5:30 pm
Where: Location TBA; call office for more info.
Price: $85 AIVF members; $95 others
For more information: (212) 473-3400

MEET AND GREET

These are opportunities for AIVF members to meet producer, distributors, funders, programmers and others, and to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only; limited 20 participants; RSVP required.*

Ellen Schneider and Marc Weiss
Executive Producers, *P.O.V.*
Tuesday, June 28, 6:00 pm

"MEET YOUR (FELLOW) MAKER" A MONTHLY MEMBER SALON

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and generally socialize.

When: The third Tuesday of each month; June 21, 6-8 pm (Drinks half-price for the first hour).
Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 Second Avenue (9th St.)
Organized by AIVF member Jonathan Berman, maker of *The Shvitz*. (Make it a regular date: plan ahead for Tuesday, July 19!)

SALONS GO NATIONAL!

Members are organizing AIVF salons in the following cities: Los Angeles, Boston, Minneapolis, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Washington, DC! For specific information on where and when, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

LATE NEWS FLASH: LOS ANGELES SALON BEGINS

Members **Doug Lindeman, Paris Poirier** and **Zack Stratis** have set up the L.A. salon! The 1st Tuesday of each month, 6:00 - 8:00 pm, at The Abbey, 692 N. Robertson, West Hollywood. Come and help build the SoCal independent community! LA-area members have gotten a mailing; if you need more specific info, call the AIVF office.

AIVF NEWS

ON-LINE UPDATE

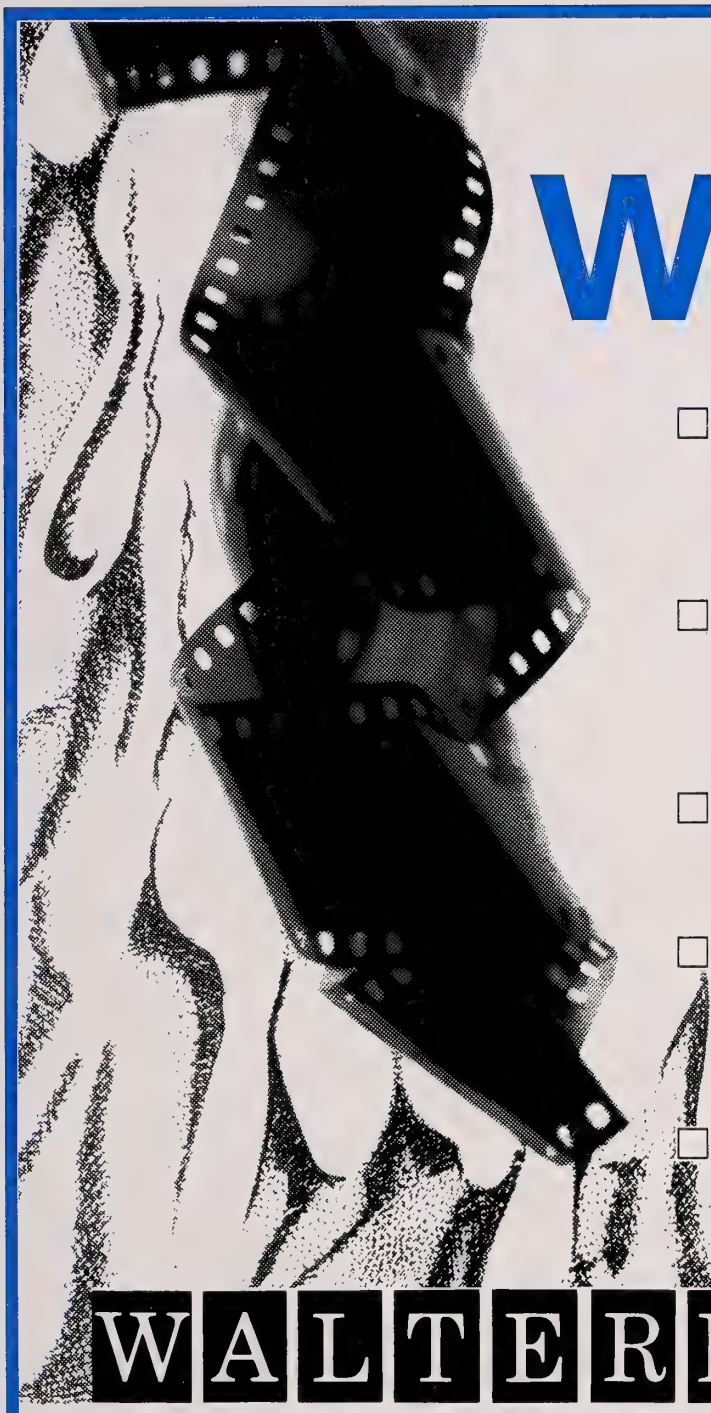
The new news is that we have started a discussion topic on the WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link) in the filmmaking conference. You can get information about the WELL by calling (415) 332-4335 (voice); their internet address is well.sf.ca.us. The WELL is a Sausalito-based conferencing center, started by the same folks who produce the *Whole Earth Review* and *Whole Earth Catalogue*. It's more expensive than AOL and has fewer bells and whistles, but the overall sensibility is more countercultural and activist-oriented (like the Whole Earth publications); *WIRED* magazine, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and AIR maintain conferences there, for example. AIVF wants to offer members as many options as possible, so you make decisions based on your interests and priorities.

We want to explore all the alternatives for providing information online, and we invite your suggestions. Let us know what you're finding as you use these new technologies and how we can put them to use for the field as a whole. We are particularly interested in talking to other organizations and businesses who are providing extensive database information

Continued on p. 62

ERRATA

IN THE APRIL ISSUE OF *THE INDEPENDENT*, WE INADVERTENTLY DROPPED A CREDIT LINE FOR THE ILLUSTRATOR, STEVE RASKIN, WHO CREATED THE SUPERHIGWAY DRAWINGS ON PGS. 28-39. WE ALWAYS TRY TO GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, AND SINCERELY REGRET THE OMISSION.



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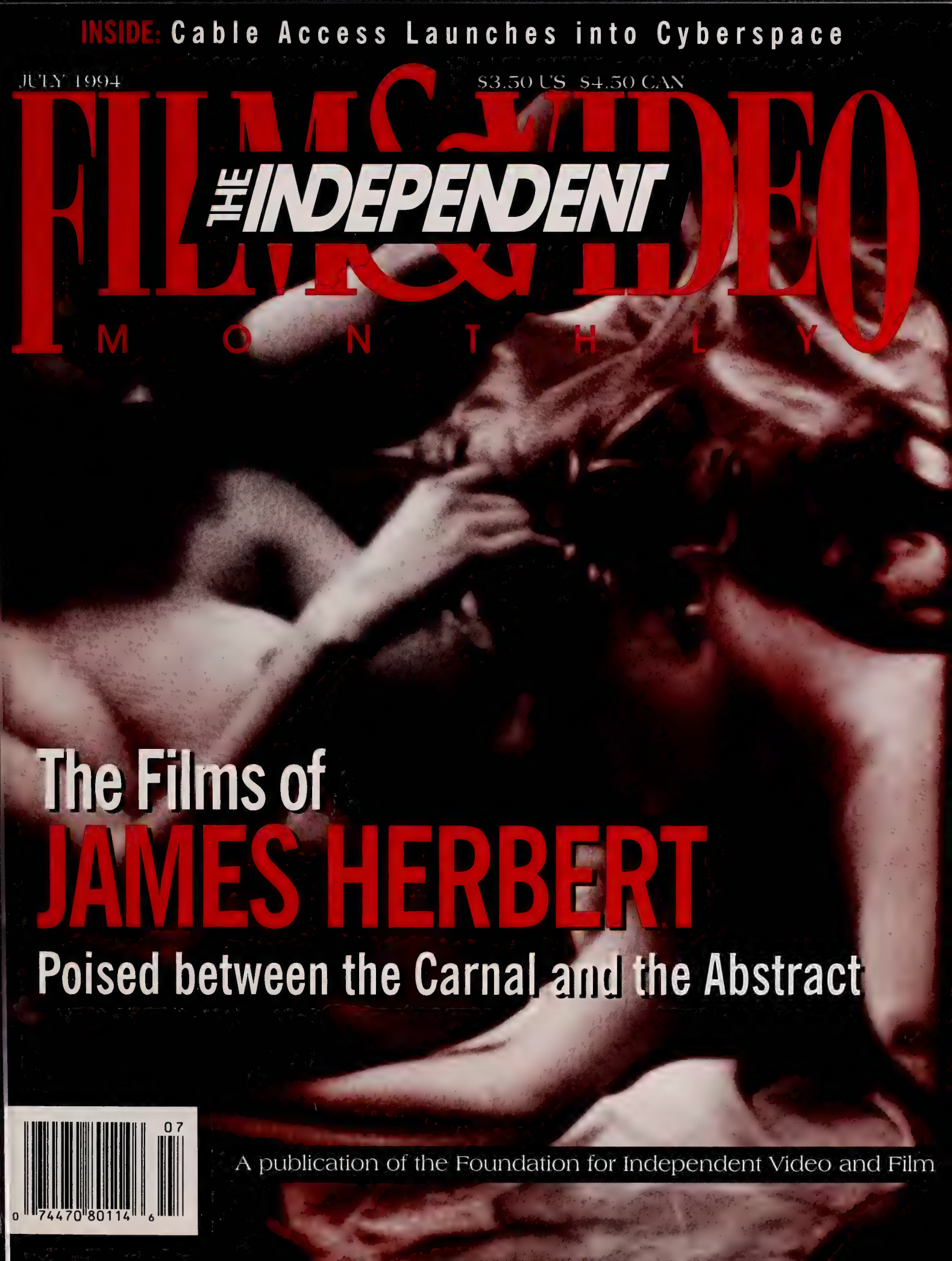
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FILM & VIDEO INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

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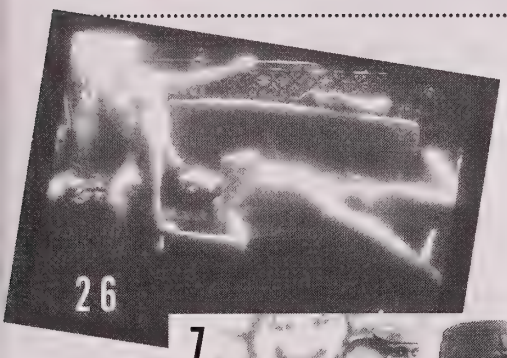
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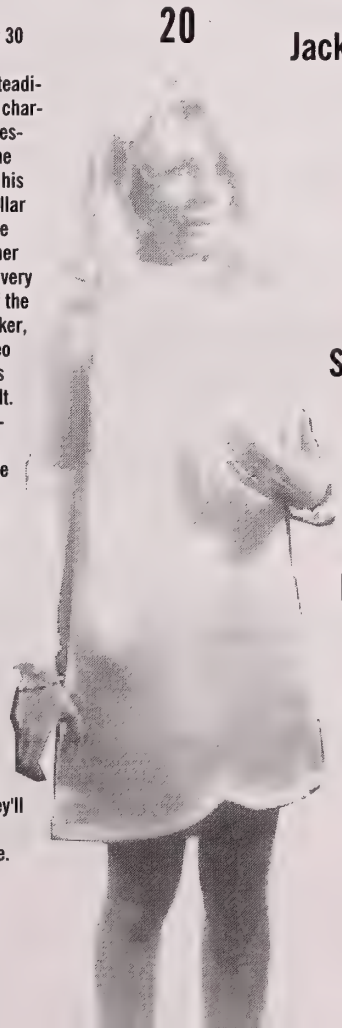
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COVER: photo by James Herbert, from *Cameo*. For 30 years, filmmaker James Herbert has quietly and steadily created a body of work characterized by a painterly aesthetic and a wedding of the sensuous and abstract in his nude studies. As Steve Dollar writes in his portrait of the artist, Herbert, a southerner since 1962, "has become very much part of the fabric of the Deep South." As a filmmaker, professor, and music video director, his influence has been even more widely felt.

Also in this issue, contributing editor Barbara Bliss Osborn discusses the changing shape of public access. Some centers are already expanding the definition of public acess beyond cable TV to include access to the Internet, satellite teleconferencing, radio, and other technologies. Osborn examines who is spearheading these new communications access centers, how they will be funded, and what part they'll play in the National Information Infrastructure.

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Praise Be

To the editor,

As a member of AIVF since 1985, the new look of *The Independent* has impressed me quite a bit. No matter how far outside the mainstream independents are, no matter how anti-Hollywood we may be, no one wants to perish in obscurity. The magazine seems more focused on the needs of independent filmmakers who try to earn a living at what we do—*and* be visible to boot. Congratulations.

Rick Field
Brooklyn, New York

Crowning Touch

To the publisher:

British Crown Archives represents British Government films produced by the Central Office of Information. It does not represent the film collections of the British Film Institute, the National Film Television and Video Archives, or the Imperial War Museum [as indicated in BCA's display ads in the November 1993 and January/February 1994 issues]. BCA apologizes for any confusion its advertisement has caused.

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PTV License Battles in Bay Area

To the editor:

In "The KQED Conundrum" [March 1994], Michael Fox states that when KQED acquired Channel 32 in the early 1970s, the new station was dedicated to minority programming. In fact, Channel 32 was used mainly to repeat programs broadcast on Channel 9 and to carry Channel 9's regular schedule when it was pre-empted by things like the KQED auction. While it is true that KQED tended to run whatever minority programming it had on Channel 32, they did so because they didn't feel it would attract a sufficient audience to justify showing on their main channel. Like most public television stations, they looked for Hispanic programming in September and Black programming in February.

The group that took the lead in wresting the Channel 32 license away from KQED was the California Public Broadcasting Forum, which had challenged the station's license as early as 1974. Minority Television Project essentially piggybacked on their case. Since MTP was the only organization to file an application for Channel 32's license, they ended up with it by default in 1991 when KQED's license for this station was revoked.

Regarding the current license challenge, Fox says the FCC is "leery of revoking [KMTP's] license in the absense of fraud or mismanagement." It is the contention of the Bay Area Multicultural telecommunications Association [which is challenging KMTP's license] that the current management of KMTP (particularly general manager Booker Wade and Otis McGee, the head of MTP's board of directors) has a record of mismanagement, and that they have not fully complied with FCC broadcast regulations or reported their activities fully to the commission as required by law.

Finally, Fox describes BAMTA as composed of representatives from the African American and Latino communities. Our initial five incorporators included an Asian American, a Latino, an African American, a Native American, and a Caucasian.

Given public broadcasting's potential as a distribution medium for independents and its dismal failture to serve the needs of minority audiences, it is important for your readers to have an accurate picture of how KMTP acquired the license, and why they may lose it.

Rick Tejada-Flores, BAMTA board member
San Francisco, CA

FILM & VIDEO INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

In Upcoming Issues:

The Film Schools

In our August/September back-to-school issue, Patricia Zimmermann surveys a dozen film schools, with a special eye on overlooked and underestimated alternatives to the top three. Plus, a report on the National Educational Media Market.

Regional Spotlight: Boston

The Independent continues its regional profiles in November with a look at Boston-area production. Featuring reports on the lively animation scene, the personal and political strains of documentary, Boston's newest film festival, access and community media, the impact of Boston's numerous colleges, and much more.



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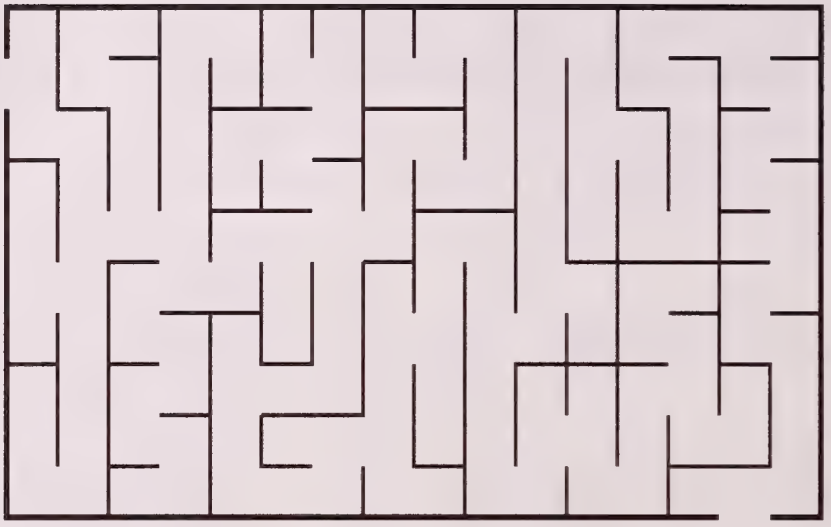
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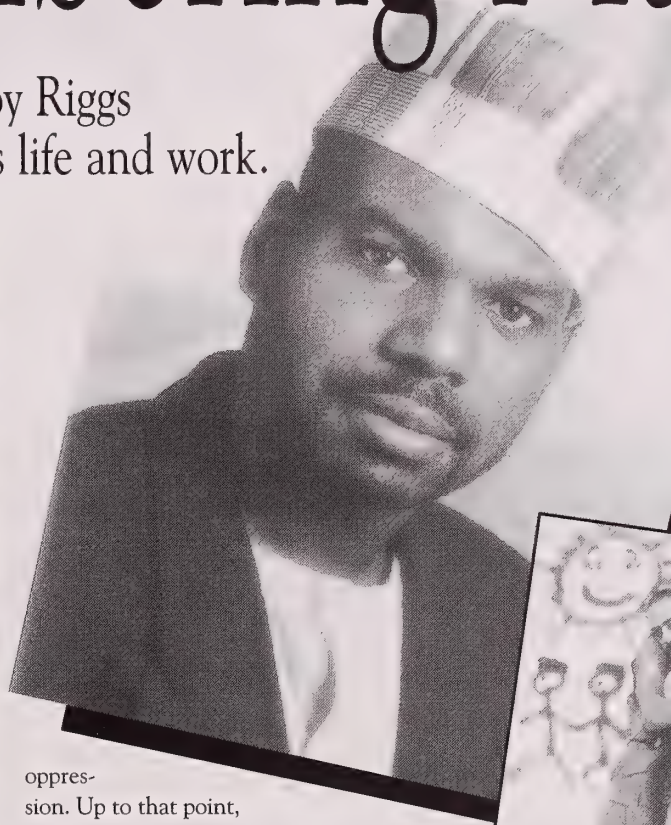
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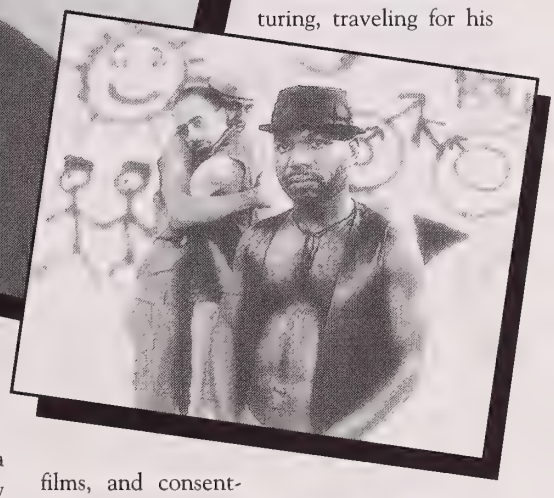
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Remembering Marlon

Two friends of Marlon Troy Riggs (1957-1994) reflect on his life and work.





MARLON RIGGS. Below: Riggs with friends in *Tongues Untied*, his first work to deal directly with his black and gay identity.

Photo: Janet Van Horn; below, courtesy Frameline.

I MET MARLON RIGGS IN 1989 WHEN HE WAS MY professor at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. I remember sitting in a darkened theater at the Pacific Film Archives one evening, surrounded by journalism faculty, students, and many members of Berkeley's gay community to view *Tongues Untied*. I hadn't realized Marlon was gay until then (even though as a lesbian I thought I was pretty good at detecting such things). Marlon's personal story unfolded amidst a montage of sensual and in-your-face images of black gay life. Speaking directly to the camera, he revealed his racial and sexual persecutions, discussing the silence that had kept him safe—but ultimately invisible—and the HIV time-bomb ticking in his veins. I was deeply influenced by Marlon's ability to blend the personal and the political in a non-traditional visual medium.

Marlon worked hard over the next few years, particularly when a national controversy erupted over plans to air *Tongues Untied* on the PBS series *P.O.V.* Many stations declined to broadcast the work. As the presidential primary approached, an isolated clip from *Tongues* appeared in a television spot for presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan. The advertisement blasted the Bush administration's handling of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and charged that the agency promoted obscene works. (Riggs had been awarded a small grant for *Tongues* from the Rocky Mountain Film Center, which administers NEA regional grants.) Marlon's notoriety as a new target of the conservative right earned him the Frameline Award of Achievement at the 16th Annual San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

During his acceptance speech, Marlon read "Letter to the Dead," a lyrical, autobiographical account of his first bout with life-threatening kidney failure. He recalled that in 1989, while lying in a German hospital bed near death, he had realized his complicity in his own oppression. Up to that point, Marlon had never addressed gay issues in his films, and he vowed to do so if he survived.

In the fall of 1990, as a student in Marlon's documentary production class, I proposed a film about lesbian fashion. He smiled, quickly seeing past the oxymoron at which many professors may have balked.

When *Framing Lesbian Fashion* premiered at the 1992 New Festival in New York, Marlon was in the audience. "They laughed in all the right places," he told me after the screening. Marlon's own film, *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* (*No Regret*), an intimate look at five HIV-diagnosed gay men who refuse to apologize for their sexuality, also premiered at the festival.

Marlon continued to push himself, creating soul-searching art at a furious pace. In addition to *No Regret*, he completed *Affirmations* and *Anthem*, two documentary shorts about black gay identity, and *Color Adjustment*, a feature-length doc about images of blacks on prime-time television. Even before *Color Adjustment* won a Peabody Award, Marlon was in production on *Black Is...Black Ain't*, an experimental documentary about black identities. The work would be Marlon's last.

Amid teaching, lecturing, traveling for his films, and consenting to a multitude of media interviews, Marlon began to exhibit signs of strain. He would often wear dark glasses to cover his HIV-related eye infections. Sometimes between classes he would lie down across several chairs in the bustling television lab and drift off. His kidneys finally gave out in December 1992, and Marlon received dialysis treatments three times a week.

The following January, I began my search for a new documentary topic. At the urging of several friends, I considered turning my lens on Marlon, and wrote him a letter explaining my interest in documenting his life, as well as my apprehensions as a relatively inexperienced white girl dogging my former professor with a camera. What I didn't mention was that as an ex-Mormon atheist, I wanted to learn more about accepting death by watching Marlon

confront his own mortality.

Marlon eventually agreed to my request and I plunged into research for the documentary, turning up a number of interesting details about Marlon's past. Jean Riggs, his mother, was 17 when she gave birth to Marlon. He was raised in Fort Worth, Texas, by Jean and his grandmother, Katie Hendrix, or Big Mama as Marlon called her. The family had followed Marlon's military father to a German base, where Marlon began high school. Extremely bright, he taught his math teacher trigonometry. He later graduated from Harvard University with high honors and decided to go into film because, he said, "Most people don't read, and I wanted to share what I'd learned about African American history with as many people as possible."

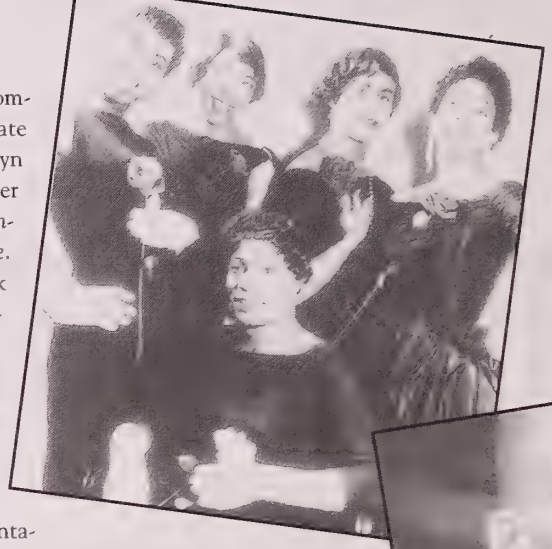
At 24, Marlon learned documentary-making at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. His first film, *Long Train Running*, which told the story of the blues music scene in Oakland, won the American Film Institute's student award in 1982.

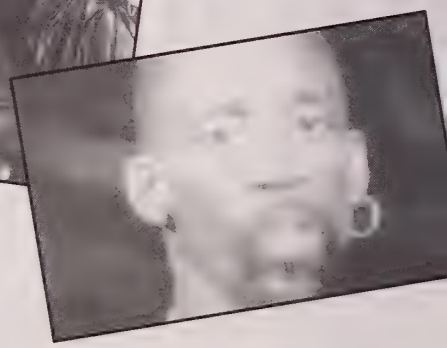
Five years later, Marlon had managed to raise money for his next film, *Ethnic Notions*. "No one wanted to fund a film about racial stereotypes," he said of the project. "Even black folk wouldn't touch it because they didn't want to drag up old images." *Ethnic Notions* won an Emmy in 1988 for its penetrating exposé of negative racial images.

During my first on-camera interview with Marlon, I asked if he believed in life after death. "Not in the literal sense a Christian would," he replied. "I believe once you're finished here, you're finished. I do believe, however, that death can be transcended through memory. And I see that in the kinds of people who animate my life. Whether it's Harriet Tubman or Soujourner Truth, Fannie Lou Hamer or James Baldwin. These people are not dead to me." Marlon added that he knew he would have to go through a personal physical hell to complete *Black Is...Black Ain't*. "I would have to reach that feeling of crisis to articulate the truths in my soul. And that's what has happened," he said.

I next filmed Marlon in May, 1994, at the California College of Arts and Crafts, where he was to receive an honorary doctorate degree. Looking thin and drawn, he walked slowly to the podium and dedicated the moment to his mother, whom he asked to stand. Jean Riggs, visiting her sick son, received a standing ovation. Marlon then sang one of his grandmother's favorite songs, the civil rights tune *I Shall Not Be Moved*. He changed the lyrics, however, to *I Shall Not Be Removed*.

I continued filming Marlon at work, home, and school. Even when he didn't feel well, he allowed the camera to roll. Meanwhile, I found an invaluable comrade and associate producer in Evelyn C. White, a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Evelyn, a black lesbian, conducted many of the on-camera interviews, spoke at fundraisers about the need for African American representation in the media, and later introduced Marlon to writer Alice Walker.





Riggs gave voice to black gay expression with works such as *No Regret (Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien)* and *Anthem* (with poet Essex Hemphill). Courtesy Frameline.

One evening, I ran into Marlon and his partner of 15 years, Jack Vincent, at the Castro Theater in San Francisco. We had just seen Alice Walker and Pratiba Parmar's film *Warrior Marks*. I invited Jack and Marlon back to my place to view a 10-minute trailer of *I Shall Not Be Removed*. Marlon wept twice, once during the scene where he had dedicated the honorary doctorate to his mother, and again when he watched a friend comfort him during a rough dialysis session.

Those days, Marlon's feelings were close to the surface. Childlike, he said what he wanted without apology. During dinner at a colleague's, Marlon left the table while Jack, the host, and I were still eating. "Marlon, that's not polite," Jack called. "We're not finished."

"I want to watch *Superman*," Marlon replied. He turned on the television and sprawled out on the couch.

Last Christmas, while his family was visiting, Marlon was hospitalized. For the next four months, his mother visited the hospital daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Jack took the evening shift. Meanwhile, Marlon's production company, Signify'n Works, monitored postproduction on *Black Is...Black Ain't*.

Marlon had planned to edit the film himself. His vision was to weave together the lyrical, self-revelatory segments as he had in *Tongues Untied*. When Marlon became too weak to narrate the film at the recording studio, former student Christina Badgley interviewed him in his hospital bed.

After Marlon's thirty-seventh birthday in February 1994, I stopped filming, and didn't visit Marlon for a month. Without my camera, there was nothing in front of me but a dear friend dying.

Marlon decided he wanted to spend his final days at his mother's home. Arriving by ambulance, Marlon emerged from a daze to greet his Big Mama, then lost clarity again. He died three days later, on April 5, 1994.

People from all walks of life attended the memorial service. The chapel at Berkeley's McGee Street Baptist Church filled early and ushers directed the remaining crowd to a second room.

Marlon had scripted the memorial two years earlier. The service began with Roberta Flack's *To Be Young, Gifted, and Black*. Several people shared their thoughts on Marlon. Alice Walker recalled giving Marlon a foot rub when he was in the hospital. "In this horrible time, when we can do nothing else, we can massage the feet of people who stand for us," she said.

Marlon will live on through his work and the lives he has touched. He shall not be removed.

KAREN EVERETT

Karen Everett is an independent filmmaker and lecturer at U.C. Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism.

> *"I believe death can be transcended through memory. And I see that in the kinds of people who animate my life.... Harriet Tubman, Soujourner Truth, Fannie Lou Hamer, James Baldwin. These people are not dead to me."*
> —Marlon Riggs

I WOULD BE HARD-PRESSED TO NAME another artist who has done more to jolt America's consciousness and conscience about black and gay concerns than Marlon Riggs.

Marlon was one of the most intelligent, creative, talented, and exciting artists working in

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both the gay and African-American communities. That he produced such a powerful body of work in a relatively short period of time only makes the anguish and sorrow of his loss harder to bear, if such a loss can ever be truly borne.

Through both his videos and his writing, Marlon allowed us to confront mainstream culture by asserting ourselves as individuals, free from societal prejudice. Realistically, such an endeavor is unattainable because it's impossible to separate ourselves from the culture in which we live. But for those of us who, because of our ethnicity, sexuality or gender, have been forced to adopt the marginalized role of Other, it is a struggle in which we must engage to survive. Marlon's work gave use the tools to come to grips with our own identities.

Marlon shed light on subjects not normally given the dominant culture's interest or attention. He gave a voice to many of us who didn't know we had one and encouraged us to discover and nurture those voices. With works from *Tongues Untied* and *Anthem* to *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* and his final project, *Black Is...Black Ain't*, he paved the way for many queer film- and videomakers and producers of color to follow in his footsteps. Through their work, politically engaged artists, particularly ones from traditionally disenfranchised communities, affirm not only their own humanity and that of their communities, but the humanity of all people.

Ethnic Notions (1987), Marlon's first major work, examined 150 years of the stereotypical representation of blacks in American popular culture and exposed how pop culture both determines and mirrors societal attitudes. It also showed the damage these images may have done—and still do—to anybody who consciously or unconsciously digests them.

Color Adjustment (1991) continues the study of prejudice and perception that Marlon began in *Ethnic Notions* by tracing four decades of American race relations through the depiction of African Americans on television. *Color Adjustment* acknowledges TV's role as part of a larger social reality, a medium that unconsciously and powerfully reflects the American social psyche and absorbs the racial conflict of American society into the familiar, non-threatening format of the primetime series. Brilliantly weaving clips from classic TV shows and news footage of social unrest with observations from producers, actors, and scholars, Riggs blends humor, insight, and thoughtful analysis to shed light on America's favorite addiction.

Marlon once said in discussing *Color Adjustment*, "The nature of TV and its attempts to deal with 'real life' issues is one of co-optation. All conflict will be resolved in such a way as to co-opt the real issues at hand. Television tends to corroborate American myths of power,

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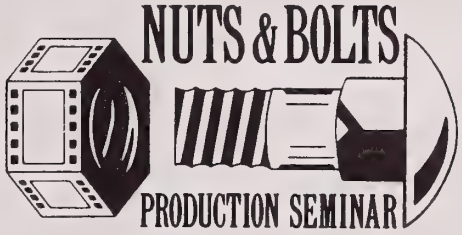


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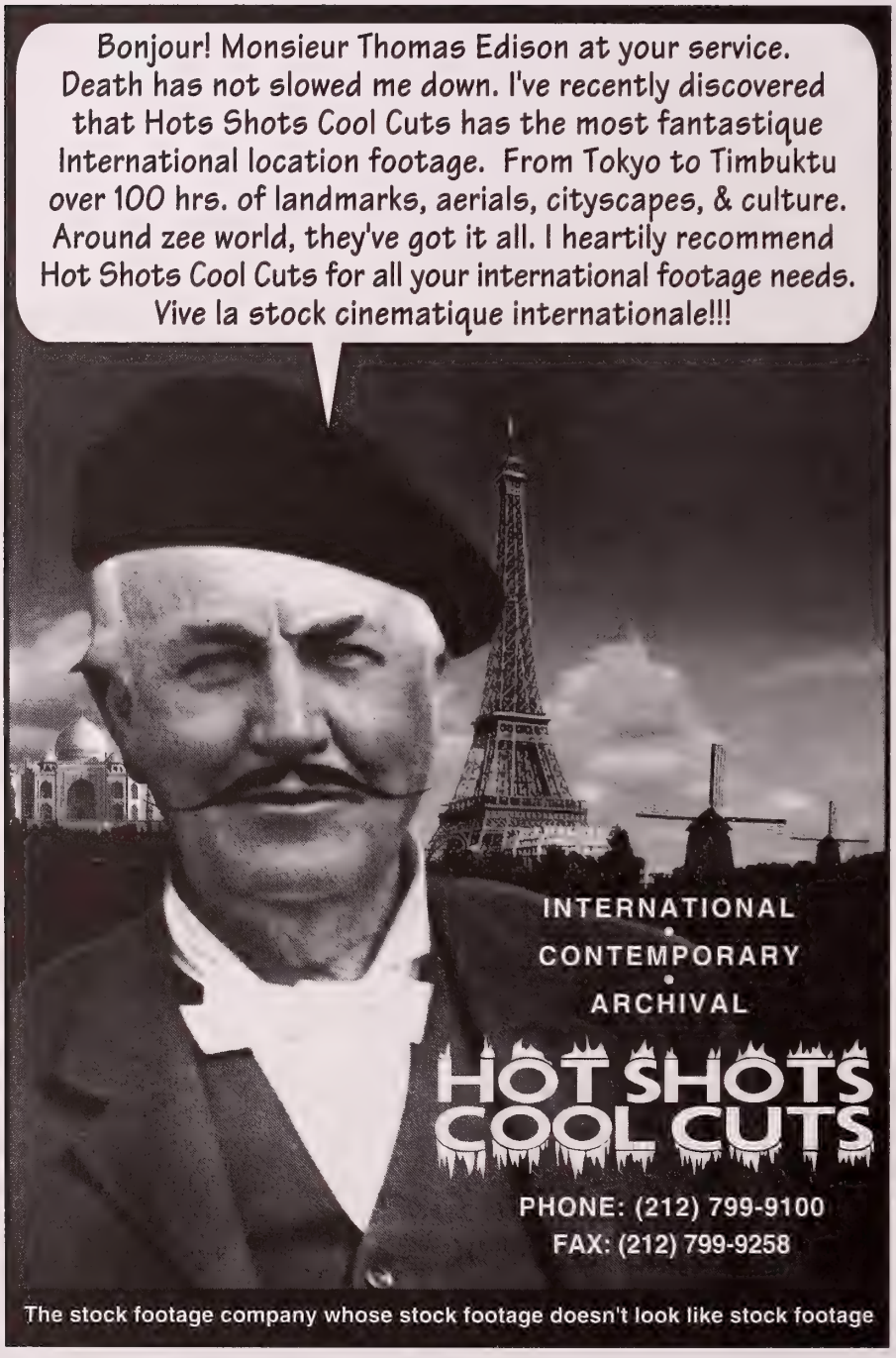
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class, and hegemony."

Several of Marlon's other works focus on gay issues. *Tongues Untied* (1989), Marlon's most personal, well-known, and controversial video, explores and explodes the invisibility cloaking the black gay male experience.

Anthem (1991), a short, experimental work, politicizes black gay male eroticism. It appropriates MTV aesthetics, house music, and the hip-hop sampling of poetry and prose by black gay writers to signify and subvert the predominant cultural and sexual ideologies that surround the subject of black masculinity. *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* (1992), Marlon's last completed work, profiles five black gay men from varied backgrounds, all of whom are living with HIV.

At the time of his death, Marlon was completing *Black Is...Black Ain't*, an experimental, semi-autobiographical examination of identity issues within the black community. The work probes the ambiguity of the competing and sometimes self-negating definitions of "blackness" that have existed throughout African-American history. *Black Is...* also explores the question of what blackness has meant to African Americans and how changing definitions of blackness have shaped different visions of "the black community."

Marlon's rejection of an objective approach to documentary filmmaking in favor of a more impassioned, emotionally engaged one, makes it possible for people outside the bounds of his intended audiences to connect with the universal aspects of his videos.

In addition to his videos, Marlon was also known for the profundity and insight of his writing, which appeared in numerous journals, anthologies, and publications, including *Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men*, *Black Popular Culture*, *Release Print*, *Outlook*, *Lambda Book Report*, and *The Independent*.

Marlon may be gone, but he left us a rich body of work, which resonates with the emotional, political, and philosophical complexities of life, and which will allow him to live on beyond his death.

KARL BRUCE KNAPPER

Film curator and critic Karl Bruce Knapper is president of the board of directors of Frameline, on the board of the Paul Robeson Fund, and a member of the Socialist Review *editorial collective. He works at Stanford's Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project.*

A fund for the completion of *Black Is...Black Ain't* has been established. Contributions should be made to: Signify'n Works, 2600 10th St., #401, Berkeley, CA 94710.

AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE FORMS PLAYHOUSE PICTURES

American Playhouse has taken a bold step into the commercial arena with the formation of Playhouse International Pictures, a company that will produce theatrical feature films largely through private financing. In a partnership with the Samuel Goldwyn Company, which will guarantee worldwide distribution, Playhouse International Pictures will make 15 films over the next three years with $70 million in financing from Goldwyn, American Playhouse, and other sources.

The new venture is well timed in view of PBS's March announcement that it would drastically decrease funding to American Playhouse over the next two years with the goal of cutting off funding entirely by fiscal year 1996. As reported in the March 14 issue of *Current*, the PBS decision was reached in response to the disproportionate cost of producing the drama series compared with most other PBS programming. Once American Playhouse goes off the air, however, there will be no place whatsoever in public television for U.S. dramatic features by independent producers.



PBS is ushering *American Playhouse* out the door. The series, which has showcased countless independent features (including Hal Hartley's *Surviving Desire*, pictured), is the only place for dramatic works by U.S. independents on national public television. Courtesy American Playhouse

Fortunately for American Playhouse, plans had already been in the works for nearly two years to create a subsidiary that would serve as a financing vehicle to produce a series of theatrical feature films. But the new venture was not originally envisioned as a replacement for production at American Playhouse. "We had planned to count on funding from PBS for a number of years to come," says senior vice president Sandra Schulberg. "Now we are just glad that we had this in the works because such a plan cannot be born one minute and enacted the next." Schulberg, together with newly appointed chief financial officer Timothy Brennan, will raise the financing for the new company, a third of which is already in place.

For Goldwyn, the joint venture is a logical extension of its long-standing production and distribution relationship with American Playhouse, including the acquisitions *Longtime Companion* and *Straight Out of Brooklyn* and the coproductions *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Golden Gate*. With Playhouse International Pictures, Goldwyn gets a guarantee of five pictures a year for three years at a reliable level of quality. "American Playhouse has a tremendous track record at making the kinds of movies that we know how to sell," says Goldwyn's president of worldwide production, Tom Rothman. "I consider [Playhouse president] Lindsay Law to be one of the great theatrical producers in the business today."

Under the new venture, creative control belongs to Playhouse International Pictures. Goldwyn, in turn, will have most of the say in the marketing of the films. Contractual commitments are in place guaranteeing that Goldwyn will open each film in a specified number of cities and will spend at least a certain amount of money on the print and advertising costs. Having a lock on a number of quality movies each year, for which they won't have to compete with Miramax or New Line, also enables Goldwyn to give a deal that is unusually favorable to American Playhouse. "The structure of the contract treats the producer and the distributor as two sides of the same investment," says Schulberg.

At press time, the first Playhouse International Pictures film was slated to go into production this summer in New Mexico. *The Lady Chieftains*, produced by David Picker (*The Saint of Fort Washington*), tells the true story of a Navajo girls' high school basketball team and the black coach who takes them to the state championships. Also in development are *Angels & Insects*, adapted from the Booker Prize-winning novel by A.S. Hyatt and directed by Philip Haas (*The Music of Chance*), and *Some Mother's Son*, written and directed by Terry George, cowriter of *In the Name of the Father*, and set in Northern Ireland.

Productions currently in the pipeline at American Playhouse will continue to fill the series' broadcast schedule into 1997, including a 13-part series *Love in Black and White*, directed by Jennifer Fox (*Beirut, The Last Home Movie*). Added to those programs will be the first five Playhouse International Pictures films, which will have their television premieres on PBS. However, the remaining 10 films will have their theatrical, video, cable, and pay TV release before showing on PBS.

In another departure from Playhouse tradition, the new company will not restrict itself to projects of American subject matter. "We have wanted for a while to be able to compete for the best material written in English," says Schulberg, "and didn't feel that we could because of the American Playhouse mandate. We made an exception with *Much Ado About Nothing* because we thought the PBS system should have it, and it turned out to be a wise investment. That film reinforced for us our desires to do what is excellent that may not be derived from American literature or subject matter."

JENNINE LANOUETTE

Jennine Lanouette is a Manhattan-based freelance writer and story consultant.

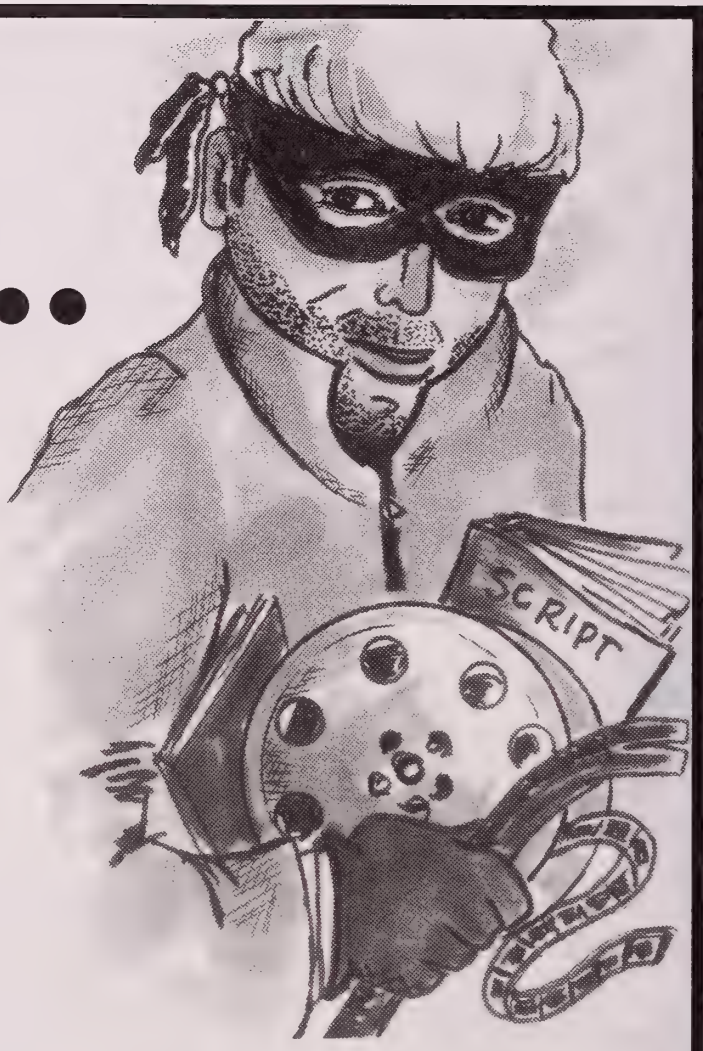
SEQUELS

Donald Wildmon's American Family Association (AFA) mounted an attack on PBS earlier this year that could have ramifications when the Corporation for Public Broadcasting reauthorization goes before Congress later this year.

In March, AFA launched a direct mail campaign to members of Congress, complaining that the miniseries *Tales of the City*, a coproduction of American Playhouse and Channel 4 in London broadcast in January by a majority of public broadcasters across the country, is part of PBS's "ongoing campaign... to promote the homosexual lifestyle and agenda." The miniseries by gay author Armistead Maupin both portrayed homosexual relationships and displayed female nudity. Yet it had no explicit sex scenes, was aired late in the evening, and began with a viewers' advisory.

Following Wildmon's campaign, PBS decided against investing in the sequel to the hugely successful and critically acclaimed miniseries, set in 1970s San Francisco. Plans were underway for American Playhouse to again partner

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with Britain's Channel Four on the series continuation, *More Tales of the City*. Maupin claims that PBS gave in to pressure brought by the radical right against the original series. PBS maintains that it was purely a financial consideration. According to American Playhouse's Sandra Schulberg, there has been a groundswell of support for the series in response to the PBS decision and, at press time, the network was in the process of deciding what to do.

•

Patricia Reed Scott has been named the new commissioner of the **Mayor's Office for Film, Theater, and Broadcasting in Manhattan**. Reed replaced Richard Brick, who resigned when incoming Mayor Rudy Giuliani failed to contact him for more than a week into the new administration ["The Phoenix Rises," April 1994]. Scott most recently served as director of development for the Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc. She also served as director of the Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting from 1983 to 1990. She was awarded the National Film Board of Review D.W. Griffith Award for outstanding contributions to the motion picture industry and the Television Academy's Board of Governors' Award for revitalizing TV production in New York. Specials she produced for public television include *Getting On*, a series on aging.

•

PBS has forged a partnership with Turner Home Entertainment to mass market selected PBS programs to the retail home video market. Turner was selected after Pacific Arts Video, which had operated PBS Home Video since August 1992, neared bankruptcy in early 1994 ["Where's the Cash? Pacific Arts Doles Out I.O.U.s," October 1993]. The Coalition for Public Broadcasting Program Access and Diversity, a group of independent producers, nonprofit institutions, business, and media arts centers that vehemently opposed PBS's hiring a for-profit distributor, issued a statement that they feared the deal would "push PBS further down the road to commercialism, distracting it from its mission to broadcast for free the diverse, innovative, and educational programming to the American people."

In addition, the coalition's statement points out that PBS currently demands that producers receiving PBS production funds—in whole or in part—must be willing to relinquish video rights to PBS. "This stipulation effectively turns PBS into an acquisitions agent for Turner Home Entertainment," the coalition concludes, adding that this is not an appropriate activity for a taxpayer supported entity like public television.

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eve luckring
MULTIMEDIA ARTIST

she can't take a joke and Club Prophylactive

BY JULIA MELTZER



Eve Luckring likes to talk about sex, as her two recent projects show: *Club Prophylactive* is a multimedia safer-sex rave, and *she can't take a joke* is a video installation on the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings. "Sex and sexuality issues are definitely a focal point in my work," admits Luckring, 31, who has lived in Los Angeles since 1989. Though formally different, both works focus on sex and the intersection of power, the language used to talk about sex, and how Americans are conditioned to deal with it.

Club Prophylactive takes the form of a rave party that aims to educate youth in a cool and comfortable environment about safer-sex practices. The piece is a collaborative effort between Luckring and four other artists and activists (Laura Owens, Diane Bromberg, Tessa DeRoy, and Tracy Fischman), plus several health clinics and community organizations in the Los Angeles area. "*Club Prophylactive* grew out of a feminist sensibility—trying to talk to women about getting a guy to use a condom," explains Luckring. "The bottom line is that teenagers need explicit information. Our idea was to create an eroticized environment in which to talk about these things. Safer sex has to become erotic for it to work."

Club Prophylactive has been held at Paramount Studios and at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), as well as on the edge of downtown L.A. in a club space called La Casa. At the most recent rave, an estimated 2,500 teenagers in baggy pants, shell-toed shoes, and parkas made their way through a weapons check and past a mailing-list sign up, receiving a free condom wrapped in an informational flyer. After entering the main space through a huge latex curtain, the teenagers were free to dance, visit a fortune telling booth (which provided peer counseling about HIV), or get a free anonymous HIV test. *Club Prophylactive* has all the trappings of a real club, but instead of music videos there are slide and video projections of safer sex and needle practices and positive images of gays and lesbians.

Funding for *Club Prophylactive* has been a challenge. Although the organizers received a grant from the County of Los Angeles AIDS Program Office, they are constantly fighting the idea that teenagers should not be sexual beings. "The idea is to normalize safer sex, so it's part of sex. That's an unbelievable challenge when some people are having sex so spontaneously and not thinking before or after because of all the guilt," says Luckring. "I see it as this incredible opportunity. We've got to talk about [sex and HIV], so maybe we can really help women negotiate pleasure. When you talk about HIV it becomes very concrete, but at the same time it empowers women to be able to say what they want and don't want."

Raised as Catholic, Luckring says she understands the stigma attached to sex and how foreign the notion of women obtaining sexual pleasure can be. Issues concerning sexuality have been part of her media work from the start. Originally from Delaware, Luckring received her MFA from UCLA in 1992. Her first work, a half-hour video called *Becoming*, deals with growing up female and girls feelings about becoming women. Luckring's video installation, *she can't take a joke*, was originally conceived as her thesis project. It was exhibited this spring at Highways Performance Space and Gallery in Santa Monica.

"What interested me about the hearings was the way in which private and public space were defined in terms of sexual harrassment and television viewing," says Luckring. "I was interested in the space in which sexual harrassment takes place—in this case, a private/public space—and in drawing a comparison with how we all watched it as a spectacle on TV. For me the event highlighted the inability of our society to talk about sex."

she can't take a joke takes the form of a peep show arcade booth, mirroring this public/private dichotomy. The space is public, but the viewing booth is private and cramped, with room for just two people. Entering through a dimly lit hallway, the viewer pays 25 cents to catch 90-second glimpses of the Clarence Thomas hearings, edited to highlight the underlying power dynamics. The viewer has a choice of two channels: he or she can watch the all-white male committee stumble over such words as "large breasts" and hear them inadequately respond to Thomas' lynching claim or watch an uncomfortable President Bush hug Thomas in Kennebunkport after his nomination was confirmed. Outside the booth there are blinking lights and peep holes through which one spies the words "She was opinionated, she was arrogant" or "What she says is not important" while Thomas' deep

laughter is heard.

"What makes me really frustrated is when people say, 'Why are you still dealing with Anita Hill? Isn't that getting old?,'" Luckring says, exasperated. Clearly, for her and many other women, this issue is not resolved. Until Luckring sees sexual harrassment taken seriously or HIV infection rates among young women go down, talking about sex will remain her obsession.

Julia Meltzer is a videomaker, media literacy teacher, and writer living in Los Angeles.

connie field & marilyn mulford
PRODUCERS/DIRECTORS
Freedom on My Mind

BY MICHAEL FOX


Photo: Anna Kuperberg

It's a cliché these days to invoke the idealism of the sixties as an inspiration; in fact; in some circles it's so out of fashion as to be an embarrassment. Not to Berkeley filmmakers Connie Field and Marilyn Mulford, whose populist sympathies seep into every frame of *Freedom on My Mind*, their Sundance award-winning documentary about the Mississippi Voter Registration Project of the early sixties.

Currently receiving its U.S. theatrical premiere at the Film Forum, *Freedom on My Mind* combines the recollections of nine black organizers and white students with mint archival footage of the Civil Rights Movement. A key element of the film is the way in which the interviewees depict how their months (and years, in some cases) as activists proved personal turning points, while they also provide abundant political and historical context.

The film centers on "freedom summer," 1964, when white, middle-class students from the North joined poor Mississippi blacks in a crusade to eradicate the racist and arbitrarily enforced voter registration procedures. That coalition led to the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), whose effort to unseat the Dixiecrat delegation at the Democratic National Convention was cynically outmaneuvered by party leaders—providing the first taste of a political disillusionment that would spread through American society and ignite the antiwar movement.

Mulford (in New York) and Field (in Boston) first crossed paths through Newsreel, the progressive filmmaking collective that thrived in the late sixties and early seventies. Field went on to produce and direct the acclaimed 1980 documentary *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter*, while Mulford's credits include *Chicano Park* (1989), an award-winning film about a Mexican-American community in San Diego.

Field began developing *Freedom on My Mind* as a dramatic feature in 1987, roused by the experiences of a close friend who had gone south in 1963 and 1964. "I was almost jealous of what he got to live through," she recalls, "because it was so grounded both in the real needs of people's lives and in a positive spirit." Field received a planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for the proposed feature, then concluded that the documentary form was a more effective approach for telling a story from several points of view.

Field and Mulford subsequently received scriptwriting and production grants from the NEH. Because of that endowment's elaborate grant application, *Freedom on My Mind* was initially constructed on paper, unlike most documentaries which find their shape during filming or in the editing room. As a result, the chal-

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lenge the filmmakers faced during production was scaling down their ambitions. After one work-in-progress screening, Mulford and Field were advised that they had three movies. In response, they ended the film after the 1964 Democratic Convention and dropped a fascinating strand (which led to Stokely Carmichael and the Black Power movement) about the class tension between black students from Howard University in Washington, DC, who were given leadership roles in Mississippi, and the local black activists.

Ultimately, Mulford and Field trimmed the stories of the white students and anchored the film in the black characters. "You learn how much a film can hold," Mulford says. "You always have to keep simplifying to make the film more powerful. Sometimes more is not necessarily better."

In the process of researching and filming *Freedom on My Mind*, the directors were reminded how many "ordinary" people have amazing tales to share—and how rarely such people surface on the mainstream media. "When you do an oral history documentary," Field allows, "you shoot a lot more and cover a lot more territory than someone making a quick film for television." (In fact, the filmmakers made a point of not cutting their subjects off—even though they shot the interviews in 16mm, not video.) Mulford notes, "Television journalists usually just talk to the leadership and don't get names in the community."

Freedom on My Mind doesn't play as mere journalism or a history lesson, content to dip into a corner of the past, but conveys a subtle yet insistent message of empowerment. "People change history," Field declares. "Every social reform that has happened in this country was done by people like the people in this film. And those same people who were disenfranchised then are disenfranchised now. I don't mean the vote; I mean having political influence on our society."

The film's power, Mulford suggests, lies in the sense of mission and unity that many African Americans discovered through the Civil Rights Movement—such as Endesha Ida Mae Holland, a teenage prostitute who became a playwright and professor. "Stories of personal transformation are especially important," says Mulford. "Young people then had a strategy and an ideal that they could change the country." Field adds, "It's not that kids are cynical today. They just don't have a vision of how to change anything. If someone came along with a vision for the next century, you would see a ton of people getting active."

Such grass-roots optimism is certainly not encouraged by the daily press. "We are definitely, permanently, on the fringe," laughs Mulford. "There's no question about that—financially and in every way. But every documentary filmmaker feels the same." With a smile, Field says, "But we always were on the fringe, even before we were filmmakers."

Michael Fox wrote about San Francisco's European funding conference in the April issue of The Independent *and is a critic and columnist for* SF Weekly, Film/Tape World, *and other Bay Area publications.*

minnie hong
EXHIBITION DIRECTOR
Asian CineVision



Photo: Bill J. Gee

By Vivian Huang

BEFORE NEW YORK'S annual International Asian American Film Festival moves into the spotlight each July, Minnie Hong, exhibition director at Asian CineVision (ACV), pulls together two separate committees to select the festival's 30 to 40 Asian and Asian American films. After the final list is set, Hong gets on the phone and writes letters, using her negotiating skills to convince filmmakers and distributors to lend the desired films.

ACV, a major force for almost 20 years in promoting Asian American and Asian films in this country, now finds itself competing with other festivals and exhibitors for the best work as the visibility and demand for Asian media has increased. To Hong, this situation presents a positive incentive. "This competitive mode is a very good thing, because it makes for a more concentrated effort to bring a commercial benefit to each film," she explains. "In the last couple of years, we worked with films that have been concerned with getting a theatrical release and picked up by a distributor. For example, last year we included *The Wedding Banquet* before it got released, and we do a lot in our promotional efforts to contact critics and distributors. That lent it a very high level of visibility for Asian American audiences, and also mainstream audiences and critics."

She continues, "And not just Asian American, but Asian films as well. Last year, we had three Asian feature films—*Tokyo Decadence*, *Women from the Lake of Scented Souls*, and *The Legend of Fong Sai-Yuk*—that later on went into commercial release." As Hong sums up, "That's the direction that we want to head in the future: where the festival can lend a level of visibility and exposure to each film that we show."

Unlike many other festivals, neither Hong nor other ACV staff are directly responsible for the program selections. A committee structure with outside experts, they believe, is the best way to appraise the diverse work coming from all parts of Asia and the U.S. "We respect the integrity of their judgement," says Hong.

"Because this is a festival that's meant to reflect the entire Asian and Asian American media-making population, that selection shouldn't rest upon the shoulders of one person."

Hong considers herself "a facilitator. My role is to make sure the festival retains its integrity and [presents a] true reflection of Asian American mediamaking—and to help the mediamakers."

Hong, 25, says she had a relatively late "awakening" in terms of identifying herself as an Asian American. She had no familiarity with the term "Asian American" until she went to Columbia University. Growing up in a middle class suburb in New Jersey, Hong always felt she was a Korean when with her immigrant family, and an American when with friends at school.

"In college, I met different types of Asians and Asian Americans from all over the world. We are different, and yet we have a lot in common because we are all Asian American... [and] the experience of racial discrimination is very similar," Hong recalls. "Initially, that was a shock."

While struggling with her personal and collective identity, Hong discovered film and video to be powerful tools for exploring political and empowerment issues. She started curating film events on campus at Columbia and working for the distributor Women Make Movies as part of her work-study program. One month before obtaining her BA in English and Women Studies in 1991, she landed the job at ACV—a job she described as "an ideal combination of what I really want to do—stay in media but also to do something in the Asian American community."

Now, three years into the job, she finds, "The thing I have been most surprised to learn at ACV is that the range of creativity is amazing." In particular, she did not anticipate finding so many Asian America mediamakers producing experimental video installations, animation, and features like Gregg Araki's *The Living End*—works that have nothing to do with Asian American themes.

"The best part about the festival is that you're bringing these works to the audience to show how strong we are as a mediamaking force. The other great thing is to see how much Asian American filmmakers can gain from communicating from each other." Events like ACV's film festival (held this year from July 22-31) help prime the pump. "If you're going to have a community that grows, it can't happen in a vacuum. That kind of exchange is going to help the Asian American community be much stronger."

Vivian Huang is a reporter at the New York Daily News.

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Photo: Rick Gerharter, courtesy Film Arts Foundation

jack lechner

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONING EDITOR FOR DRAMA, CHANNEL 4 Great Britain

BY MICHAEL FOX

ALTHOUGH AMERICANS may perceive Great Britain's Channel 4 as somewhere between PBS and heaven, Jack Lechner knows better. "We're a cross between PBS and the Fox network," Channel 4's assistant commissioning editor for drama chuckles, listing *Roseanne*, *Bhaji on the Beach*, and *Cheers* as indicative of their fare. "We're TV for all of the people some of the time."

Lechner, 31, describes Channel 4 as the world's only commercial public service broadcaster. The network is required to provide an alternative to the BBC and ITV (the commercial station), although it now supports itself entirely through advertising. An impossible situation to imagine in the United States, Channel 4's existence is feasible largely because of the absence of cable penetration in the U.K. and the government's support, at the time of Channel 4's formation, of the idea of a broadcast channel that addresses underserved audiences.

A former Hollywood development executive with stints at Columbia Pictures under David Puttnam and with Alan Parker's and Art Linson's production companies. Lechner was recruited three years ago by David Aukin, head of Channel 4's drama department. The three-person group annually produces four mini-series, such as *Tales of the City*, and 12 to 15 theatrical movies broadcast under the "Film on 4" banner. On average, two American filmmakers are funded each year, with Hal Hartley (*Simple Men*, *Amateur*), Allison Anders (*Mi Vida Loca* with HBO) and Todd Haynes (*Safe*) among the directors recently backed by Channel 4.

The drama department is artist-driven, although it is unlikely to get involved in a director's first feature, Lechner explained at the first annual International Film Financing Conference in San Francisco in January. "We're always more interested in a terrific filmmaker who doesn't know what he wants to do than in a great script where the filmmaker is unknown." That doesn't mean the drama group prefers dealing with known quantities out of a reluctance to take chances. On the contrary, they're often drawn to a project because it is unlikely to find support elsewhere. "The most successful films are the ones we took the biggest risk on," says Lechner, citing *The Crying Game* and *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Or, to put it another way, "I believe it's our job to

buy pigs in pokes."

The drama department is separate from the vaunted independent film and video department, where Alan Fountain is about to conclude his tenure after a decade at the helm. The latter group programmed the now-defunct series *The Eleventh Hour* and is responsible for *In Your Face*, a late-night slot that shows challenging films such as *Poison*, *The Living End*, *Swoon*, and *Calendar*.

Aukin hired the Arlington, Virginia-born Lechner (a film studies major at Yale and New York University film school dropout) because "he wanted someone who would make the Channel 4 movies travel farther," Lechner recalls. Lechner's approach to making stronger movies centers on perfecting the screenplay. "The great weakness in the British film industry has been script development," he asserts. "Money is scarce, so they'd ram it through [before the script was ready]. You'd see a lot of films that were full of striking things but didn't live up to their potential." A surprising statement to anyone familiar with the work of Alan Bennett and Dennis Potter, but these writers are apparently exceptions; Lechner pushed writer/director Paul Anderson through seven drafts of *Shopping* and claims the work took a quantum leap each time.

Appearances notwithstanding, Lechner's Hollywood training did not impart a passion for torturing screenwriters. "Whenever possible we stay with the same writer beginning to end," he explains. "And when it isn't working, we're more likely to abandon it than bring in another writer. We still have a great reverence for the writer." The affable Lechner names former *New Yorker* editor William Shawn as a role model: "If you do it right, you vanish," Lechner says. "When I have are really good day, I feel like a good sushi chef—making something ephemeral in such a way that everyone is satisfied with it."

Despite the smaller budgets at Channel 4, Lechner doesn't miss Hollywood in the least. For one thing, the pace is much less frantic. He'll meet with anyone who requests a meeting, he says, and that's true of almost everyone at Channel 4. Of course, Lechner's greatest satisfaction stems from having greater authority to greenlight pictures (the three drama executives jointly discuss their respective recommendations, with Aukin holding veto power). "You can spend years in L.A. and work on almost nothing that gets made," he points out. "Movies you want can't get made, and others that you don't care about are okayed easily. Just as underdevelopment is the biggest problem in Britain, overdevelopment is the problem in Los Angeles."

Michael Fox is a San Francisco-based reporter for Film/Tape World *and other publications.*

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BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

Mentors & Godfathers:

The Offer Directors Can't Refuse



In the world of independent filmmaking, first-time feature directors are driven by a strange fuel of sheer will, talent, and perpetual hope. Sometimes a filmmaker's potential is recognized not only by family and friends, but by established directors or producers. Sometimes these veterans become executive producers; at other times, they establish a more informal "mentor" or "godfather" relationship with the novice director.

First-time filmmakers should have a reasonable idea of what to expect from mentors. They can offer somewhat intangible, yet significant support: an introduction, a contact, a fresh perspective, advice, and a validation of the novice's potential. But one shouldn't expect them to contribute or raise funds. More often, their presence on a project provides a certain comfort level to financiers and distributors, who believe that a mentor can "backstop" for the first-time director if any problems arise.

Mentoring is not a new phenomenon. Francis Ford Coppola executive produced George Lucas' *American Graffiti* and produced Carroll Ballard's feature debut, *The Black Stallion*. Steven Spielberg godfathered Kevin (*Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*) Reynolds' first film, *Fandango*, under the Amblin Entertainment banner. More recently, Oliver Stone, Spike Lee, Stephen Soderbergh, and Martin Scorsese have all mentored first-time directors. *Terminator* and *Aliens* producer Gale Anne Hurd shepherded screenwriter Neal Jimenez's codirectorial debut, *The Waterdance*. Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* began as a down-and-dirty, black-and-white, 16mm film, then picked up steam, stars, and funding once Harvey Keitel threw his weight behind the project (eventually becoming its coproducer). After the success of *Reservoir Dogs*, Tarantino helped his friend and colleague Roger Avary get his first feature, *Killing Zoe*, out of the gate.



How these relationships come about varies from film to film. In the case of *Naked in New York*, Martin Scorsese reached out to a first-time filmmaker, Dan Algrant. The film, which tells the story of a young playwright whose romance with an aspiring photographer unravels just as his first play is produced off-Broadway, features some impressive talent: Eric Stolz (*The Waterdance* and *Bodies, Rest & Motion*), Mary-Louise Parker (*Longtime Companion*, *Fried Green Tomatoes*), Ralph Maccio, Whoopi Goldberg, Kathleen Turner, and Timothy Dalton. *Naked in New York* was produced by film and stage veteran Fred Zollo (*Sex, Drugs, and Rock & Roll*, *Mississippi Burning*), while Scorsese received an executive producer credit. Fine Line is distributing the film as well as financing it, along with Columbia TriStar Home Video.

With these names lined up, Algrant seems to have hit the indie filmmaker lottery. But he insists the project was never a sure bet. An award-winning Columbia film school student who had directed about a half-dozen shorts, Algrant had written a script about jazz greats Charlie Parker and Lester Young that was passed along to Scorsese's office in the late eighties. Although there was some discussion between Algrant and Scorsese's staff, the screenplay served mainly as a writing sample.

Algrant subsequently enrolled in a course that Scorsese was teaching at Columbia and showed the director a few of his student films. "Marty liked the films—and he is not one to offer gratuitous praise," recalls Algrant. In fact, Scorsese asked him for copies of the shorts for his archives. "It was a very proud moment at a time when my self-confidence wasn't exactly high," Algrant says.

One year later, Algrant received a phone call from Scorsese. "Marty had just finished *The Last Temptation of Christ* and said he wanted to start producing films to help out certain filmmakers," Algrant says. "He asked about work-

Dan Algrant (pictured at left) found a mentor in Martin Scorsese for his debut feature, *Naked in New York*, while Anthony Drazen hooked up with executive producer Oliver Stone for *Zebrahead* (below, with Michael Rappaport and N'Bushe Wright).

Courtesy Fine Line Features; below: courtesy Triumph Releasing Corporation.

ing with me, and I, of course, said 'sure.' It was out of the blue."

According to Algrant, Scorsese's involvement in *Naked in New York* included reading every draft of the screenplay (which evolved from one of Algrant's short films), consulting on casting, watching all the dailies, and speaking with Algrant two to three times a week during the film's 30-day shoot. He showed Scorsese his fine cut, seeking advice from him "especially in terms of the narrative," Algrant says. "We saved two days working on certain aspects of the camera work during production." Scorsese later championed the film to Fine Line.

Algrant appreciates the differences in how he and Scorsese fared with their first films. "It took years for Marty to make *Who's that Knocking at My Door?* Today the process is different. It's a business to make a film; there is an expectation of a certain level of casting so that an audience will go and see a film. Although there may be more money involved, there's still financing and budgeting constraints."

The once independent and always independently spirited Oliver Stone worked with two first-time filmmakers whose films were released in 1993: Anthony Drazen's *Zebrahead* and Steve Anderson's *South Central.*

Drazen's *Zebrahead*, a story of interracial romance between two urban high school students, was developed first at the Sundance Institute's Directors and Screenwriters Workshops in 1987. Subsequently, producer's representative and producer Jeff Dowd optioned the script. Dowd and partner William Willett brought the project to Stone's Ixtlan production company.

Ixtlan president Janet Yang recalls, "I immediately liked the idea of getting a sense of what's going on in high schools today, but not necessarily in the inner city or Beverly Hills." The screenplay appealed to Stone, says Yang, due to his interest in reality-based projects. "Tony had done a good short film previously. So after reading an early draft of the script, we met with him," Yang recalls. "It was more a gut feeling and a concept that we went with."

Stone and Yang helped nurture the film by interesting Larry Estes, then a Columbia TriStar Home Video executive, in financing the project. "Larry was interested in doing films with Ixtlan, and Columbia TriStar had funding [through its Equity Acquisition Program], and they were at the tail end of the funding cycle,"

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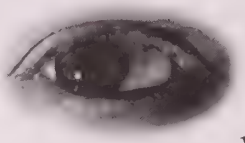
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Yang notes. (Now defunct as an equity funding entity, Columbia TriStar Home Video made possible such films as *One False Move*, *Waterdance*, *Gas, Food, Lodging*, and *Mac*, among others.)

As Yang explains, Stone and Ixtlan served as "a protective device, so Tony had final cut." They wanted to make sure "that the truth of the project would come through, rather than just plugging in stars—which we couldn't do anyway on the film's [$2.3 million] budget." Stone's role included commenting on the first director's cut and assisting the producers in securing a theatrical distribution deal with Triumph Releasing (a sister company to Columbia TriStar Home Video). Triumph was in the process of making plans to position itself as a specialty film distributor and chose *Zebrahead* as its premiere film.

Although Stone's endorsement of *Zebrahead* was key to having it produced and released, the use of his and Ixtlan's names on the film was "a point of debate" concerning its marketing, Yang acknowledged. They were aiming for a balance between noting Stone's involvement as executive producer and not diminishing the roles of the director and producers. "Ultimately, it's up to the audience to decide how important is such a credit," she says. "Oliver's name was just one marketing element, along with a fabulous soundtrack and an effective trailer." Although the film's box office was lukewarm, Drazen is currently directing the film *Imaginary Crimes*, starring Harvey Keitel, for Morgan Creek.

Establishing a relationship with a mentor often begins with a screenplay or sample reel, which may or may not be the basis for a feature project. In the case of Steve Anderson, his short *Hearts of Stone* was seen by Yang at a screening at Chanticleer Films. The film, an unflinching portrayal of two gang members who settle their differences over a game of Russian Roulette, impressed the producer. She then read Anderson's *South Central* screenplay, which evolved from *Hearts of Stone* and was based on the book *Crips*, by Donald Bakeer, and found it "incredibly powerful."

Although Stone initially found the film's ending problematic, Ixtlan was nonetheless interested. Material that's a bit raw is no problem for this production company, says Yang, who likes to get involved early with such projects. "This process is so different from going to financiers, who don't want to write the check unless the project's perfect."

As Stone observed, "Steve's own commitment to the project, his extensive research, and the quality of his writing convinced me that this film needed to be made and seen. One of the pleasures of 'succeeding in Hollywood' is being able to help others whose voices should be heard."

Once again, Larry Estes agreed to finance the $2.2 million budget. While Anderson "called in favors" to establish a strong production crew, Yang and coproducer William B. Steakley worked on the casting and production. Stone's involvement in *South Central* included contacting key individuals within the film industry and expressing support for the film, as well as offering suggestions in the editing room as it reached final cut. "It was during this postproduction and re-editing period that Oliver's support was more than initially expected," Yang remarked.

Ironically, the film's release was caught in the tragic aftermath of the South Central Los Angeles riots. Warner Bros. (which bought the rights to the film from Columbia TriStar) ultimately gave it only a limited release in major urban markets.

Yang says Stone will continue to work with young filmmakers with visions that are absent from the mainstream. Ixtlan is in negotiations with a few first- and second-time filmmakers for future projects, although Yang admits that Ixtlan's extensive development and production slate causes them to be very selective.

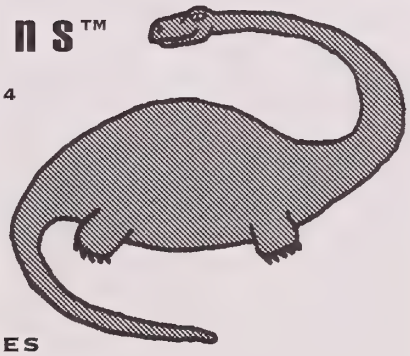
Mentors also can be interested in more modestly budgeted films. A case in point is *Suture*, an avant-garde, stylish thriller concerning memory, race, and identity, which was produced, written, and directed by Scott McGehee and David Siegel. Collaborators on two earlier short films, McGehee and Siegel had raised enough funds to take the film through principal photography and a rough cut. The rough cut was brought to the attention of director Steven Soderbergh by the assistant director's friend, Allison Brantley, a former Avenue Pictures executive who became one of the film's coproducers. "This was amazing, since we didn't come from film school where you often make contacts," McGehee remarked.

"After Steven saw the film, we met with him, and he asked if there was anything he could do to help the film," McGehee explained. "Steven helped the film by looking for investors and talking about the film during screenings for investors and acquisitions people." Eventually Soderbergh signed on as the film's executive producer.

Soderbergh's efforts bore fruit when he introduced McGehee and Siegel to Michele Halberstadt of ARP, a French distributor and sales agent, which acquired the Western European rights to the film—a sale that provided the filmmakers with the needed completion funding. (The remaining worldwide rights were acquired by Samuel Goldwyn Films.)

Both McGehee and Siegel observed, "Steven put in time and energy for a process that started out for a few weeks and turned into five months. He easily could have said at one point, 'Best of luck, guys, but I have to go.' But

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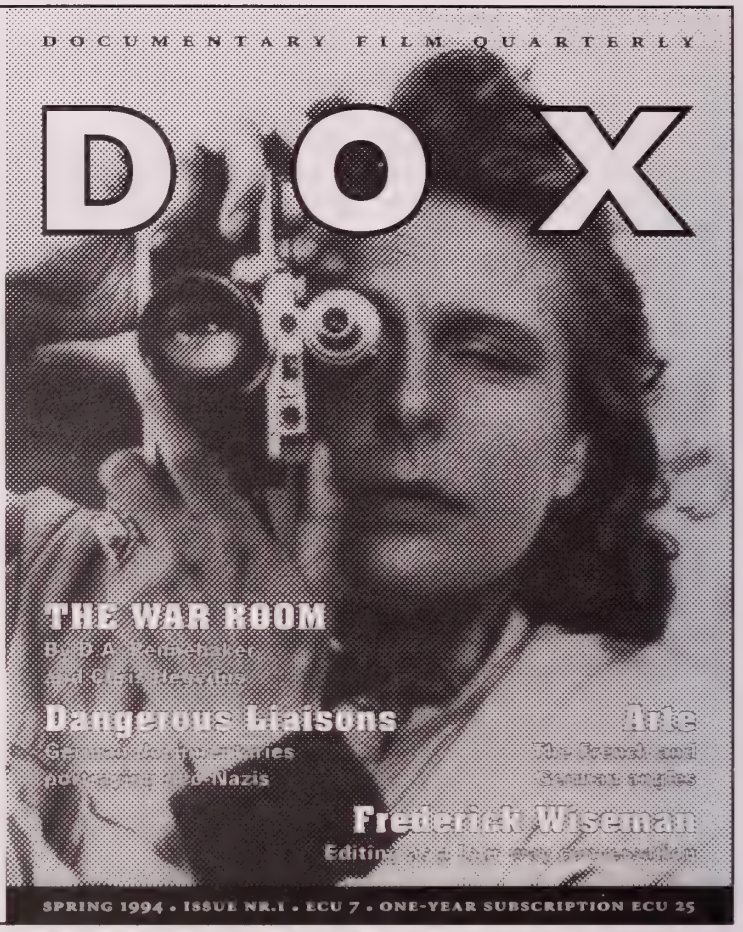
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he didn't. His support was unwavering."

Sometimes the relationship between mentor and novice can go awry. New York University student Darnell Martin had developed a working relationship with Spike Lee, having been assistant cameraperson on *Do the Right Thing* and the recipient of a New York University student grant from Lee. When first seeking financing and distribution for her screenplay *I Like It Like That* (which she describes as "a Latino *Moonstruck*"), Martin met with production executives at New Line Cinema, who strongly urged the presence of a "godfather" producer on the project. Martin discussed the situation with Lee, who agreed to serve as the film's executive producer. He helped bring the film to Universal Pictures, where some interest was shown in the project.

However, the two eventually decided to part company due to "creative differences," according to Martin. (Representatives at Lee's production company, Forty Acres and a Mule, declined comment.) Martin says that hers was no "Cinderella story," since several studios and production companies expressed an interest in the film with or without Lee's involvement. (Columbia Pictures eventually acquired the rights.) But she acknowledges the importance of Lee's "incredible support" in her becoming a filmmaker, and admits that Lee's initial involvement helped raise the project's profile.

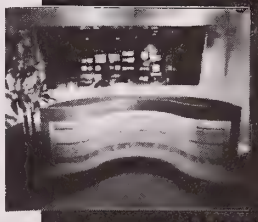
Spike Lee has mentored other projects, including *The D.R.O.P. Squad,* directed by David Johnson, as well as the proposed "sword and sandals" film *Negropolis*, which will be directed by Wendell Harris (*Chameleon Street*).

Novice filmmakers can find a mentor from the ranks of veteran low-budget producers and directors, too. *Swoon* director Tom Kalin and producer Christine Vachon were instrumental in securing funds for reshoots and postproduction work on Rose Troche and Guinevere Turner's feature debut *Go Fish*. The lesbian romance received the funds from Islet president John Pierson, and its worldwide rights were acquired by Goldwyn.

As these cases illustrate, novice filmmakers find mentors through an amalgamation of luck, timing, contacts, and talent. One can only hope that this mentoring trend is not some aberration, but will continue. Asked why an established director would assist a younger filmmaker, *Reservoir Dogs* executive producer Monte Hellman acknowledged, "It's an identification of the plight that you've been through yourself. You know the odds are high that you will come across another Quentin, but when you do and can help him, it's like you're giving back what you took out of the system, when you, as a young filmmaker, were starting out."

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and principal in the Cinema Film Consulting company.

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James Her



bert's

Naked Truths



From *Automan* (1988)
All photos courtesy filmmaker.

BY STEVE DOLLAR

NO ONE ELSE MAKES FILMS LIKE JAMES HERBERT. That sounds like an old Hollywood cliché, but it holds true. As much as any 1950s or '60s cine-iconoclast who preceded him up from the underground and into the museums, Herbert is a singular kind of filmmaker. He seems to consciously distance himself from trends and movements while creating a rich, evocative language that speaks of an intensely personal approach. Though a loner, both in terms of his idiosyncratic films and his method of working, Herbert has influenced a surprisingly wide array of people. As a university teacher, a director of music videos, and a long-time regular on the art film circuit, he has made his presence felt.

Like cinema pioneer Stan Brakhage, with whom he studied at the University of Colorado from 1960 to 1962, Herbert works at the pace of an old-fashioned craftsman. He makes a handful of short pieces every year, gets them screened at a

select few festivals, then returns to other endeavors. These include an equally insular career as a painter and a more public one as an art professor at the University of Georgia in Athens, where he's taught for the past 31 years. Thanks to early connections to such Athens-spawned rock bands as the B-52s and R.E.M., Herbert also has enjoyed (and sometimes endured) stints as director of unconventional rock music videos, which he generally treats as extra-short films that entirely avoid images of rock bands.

An archetypal New England Yankee in Flannery O'Connor's court when he arrived in Georgia in 1962, Herbert has become very much part of the fabric of the Deep South. Over time, he's merged with a legacy of visionary outsiders and privileged eccentrics, recondite artists, and extroverted folk magicians whose workings are colored by time and place. Certainly, that's true of Herbert's films. From *Porch Glider* (1970) to *John Five* (1992), his work is characterized by geography as much as by the painterly aesthetic he brings to the film medium.

"I fought the South for two years," says Herbert, 55, who owns a two-story Victorian house with lofty ceilings and cracking paint a few blocks from campus. "I had a lot of trouble adapting to the climate. Then I went through a phase where it became the reason for my existence; the whole Southern thing became the content of my work. I found that the atmosphere, the climate, the sensual aspects of the South were real important to my sensibility, so I hooked up with that."



From *Three* (1974)

Herbert's films employ whatever landscape or interiors are at hand: lush fields overrun with kudzu, rusting old cars, decaying industrial buildings, porch swings, messy collegiate apartments. Herbert usually casts students or local young bohemians of both sexes, people who tend to be slim and physically well-defined, downright classical in body type. They casually pose nude, alone or often in couplings or triplings, prompting a host of associations and variations of mood that can be subtle or jarring.

What prevails is a sense of melancholy, mystery, or languor. Herbert's films are at once carnal and abstract; they both remark on the place of the nude in art history and explore the texture of flesh within the grain of the image. This is made more apparent by Herbert's signature use of rephotography, a method by which he painstakingly projects raw footage and reshoots it frame by frame. Far from a gimmick, this technique gives the completed work the feel of time frozen and examined, of still lifes sprung to life, of motion studies with a poetic intent. Yet, as is commonly said of Herbert's films, there is also a sense of disconnectedness, a tension arising from improvised scenarios in which the couples don't couple, but appear to be suspended in a kind of meta-erotic limbo.

Herbert's first film screened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, *Porch Glider*, was "a hippie film in a way, kind of runaway kids having sex on the front porch," the filmmaker says. "It did have a sensational aspect to it, but in a funny way there'd be more moralism about it now." It may seem odd, as Herbert lives in a relatively small Southern town, that he's experienced few problems with censorship or Moral Majority types. But then, his films have neither won the exposure of, say, *Tongues Untied*, nor confronted touchy social issues in a direct manner. It was only recently, in fact, that he ran into any public interference, when a museum screening of *Low*, a rock video for R.E.M., caused an Athens reactionary to charge that "I was teaching children how to be lesbians," Herbert recalls.

"I'm sure there are obvious psychological reasons for having a fetishistic interest in the nude," says Herbert, who accepts with humor the criticisms of some who find his films artsy-fartsy or unhealthily obsessed with naked bodies. "But I do like the idea that when persons are nude they move differently. Let's just say that when they're nude, it's an occasion. Something happens when they are nude that allows me to think up things to do, and also for them to get into interesting juxtapositions. Somebody said, 'What would this film be if they were all in clothes?' Well, it wouldn't exist. That's like saying to someone who did a still-life, 'What would your painting be like with carrots instead of apples?' It is, in fact, the inspiration of what the subject is that gets you going and allows certain forms and shapes to happen."

His most recent films, screened in February at New York City's

Museum of Modern Art (whose film curator Lawrence Kardish was an early and avid supporter of Herbert), arc from the lushly romantic to the grittily urban. *De Luce in Luce* (1993), filmed at the Bellagio Center, a Rockefeller Foundation retreat in the northern Italian Lake Country while Herbert was on a foundation grant, is perhaps his most travelogue-like effort. It juxtaposes dappled greenery and rippling water with a weathered villa that appears midway between grandeur and ruin. A young man, actually a bartender from a nearby village, is half of a particularly detached couple. The other nude is an actress from Florence, hired unseen yet uncannily "Herbertesque." Except for a brief sequence that Herbert describes as "a kind of violation," there's not much connection, yet the actors are both quite beautiful and lend their bodies to a haunting mood. Music by Couperin and Marias evokes the French Baroque, while a poem by Pasolini suggests a pre-AIDS erotic innocence that could be read as sadly wistful. The film, especially with Herbert's after-the-fact meshing of disparate images, is gorgeous, though seemingly for only its own sake.



Herbert's films and their photos remnants, such as this still from the 1986 film *Island*, are melancholy landscapes of bodies and movement.

Herbert mentions that New York audiences were more in tune with *Waves and Particles* (1993), which uses an industrial soundtrack (rumbling freight trains, eerie droning echoes that recall dream sequences in David Lynch movies) and, for a stretch, a bleak warehouse backdrop shot in harsh-looking, high-contrast black-and-white. Where the Italian film uses a male and female actor in isolation, *Waves* features two young women who seem more strongly connected to each other than to the male who completes the threesome. A zebra makes a guest appearance, and Herbert contends you can read whatever you wish between the stripes.

There's also *John Five*, which, Herbert notes, the *Village Voice* denounced as "prurient and pretentious," but won a rave from the *New York Times* during its screening at the 1992 New York Film Festival. It's the strongest work of the three, shifting between black-and-white scenes with the nipple-ringed John and his friend Noah and a color sequence with John and the partner he chose for the film, Athens horror novelist Poppy Z. Brite.

"A lot of people think it's just about naked bodies," says Jem Cohen, a New York independent filmmaker who became friends with Herbert through a mutual association with R.E.M. "But some of the most glorious moments in Jim's films might be a stack of newspapers or a pile of junk some kids left in a corner of the room. His work is demanding in the sense that you have to put aside certain expectations and allow yourself to get lost in the light. It can be rewarding if you let that happen."

For another key to Herbert's approach, the filmmaker describes how he made his first personal film. "It was called *Outscape* and was a film about a cat in my room," he says. "It came about by trying to think up an idea for a film, having the camera, having the film, but not being able to come up with any idea for a movie. So what I did was set the time of day. I said: Next Wednesday, I will make a film at 3:30. So I sat there at 3:30 and still had no idea, and I simply put a photo flood in the interior ceiling lamp in the room and started to shoot the room. I walked out of the room with a camera and found a cat there, and chased the cat out to an old car. It was a student film, in a way, but I remember getting excited by the notion that you don't have to have an idea for a film, that you can simply pick up the camera, have a vague notion and go. And, ever since, I've worked that way."

Lance Bangs, a University of Georgia BFA candidate who has studied with Herbert, praises his teacher for his open-ended approach. "He stresses that we personalize the stance we use in a film," says Bangs, who works in super 8, 16mm, and video, and spent last summer documenting the touring Lollapalooza festival for the alternative rock band Mercury Rev. "Not necessarily in the use of personal subject matter, but in a perspective that comes across in the film that conveys something internal."

Filmmaker Dominic DeJoseph, like Bangs, has often screened work at the monthly Flicker Film nights staged at the local 40 Watt Club, a rock-'n'roll bar. "The best thing about Jim is he's open to any style or form you want to work in. It's pretty rare," says DeJoseph, also a former student. "Jim's class has pretty much facilitated the making of a lot of [independent] films here."

When Herbert cites his own influences, besides Stan Brakhage, three names come up. "I'd like to be like Tarkovsky," he says of the late Soviet

visionary, whose films included *Stalker*, *Andrei Rublev*, and *Solaris*. "He creates a hypnotic, semi-dream state, where you have to give in to the film, because the film is not pulling you around—people are not getting in and out of cars, slamming doors, and cutting the scene there. If you're not willing to have this gaze of suspension, not willing to float, then the film is very annoying." He also cites the 19th century photographer Henri-Jacques Lartigue for his "very amazing a-compositional framing," and the photographer Larry Clark, notorious for his *Tulsa* and *Teen Lust* photo series, which were total, explicit immersions into the lives of speed freaks and boy hustlers. "He was so incredibly bold and strident, and no one dared to make pictures like he made and have them published."

Later, Herbert talks about finding inspiration at the much-publicized New York exhibit of paintings by the 71-year-old British artist Lucian Freud, whose boldly non-traditional figurative work offers, literally wrinkles and all, an interesting contrast with the filmmaker's own borrowings from the figurative nude genre.

"I was tremendously moved by the notion that all the history of modern art, all the idea of invention, of having to do advanced design things...was sort of unnecessary," Herbert says. "What Freud shows is that you can paint just like you're not supposed to, and they can be wonderfully new and extraordinary. It was a great thing to see how real art does not have to be about certain kinds of eccentric positions."

HERBERT'S USE OF REPHOTOGRAPHY IS A LARGE PART OF WHAT SO actively personalizes his films, what makes him distinct from not only mainstream narrative cinema but even the residual poetic impulses of American independent film.

For each new project, Herbert shoots about 800 feet of color and black-and-white film, in what he describes as a "foraging" process. He then projects the footage onto a wall in his bedroom, where he has a camera mounted on a tripod with an animation motor, copying at two frames per second.

"I like to be able to look at the image projected on a surface," he says. "A reflected image has so much more substance. What I'm doing is looking at the film frame by frame and making decisions as I go about how long it will be on, how long it will be copied by the copying camera. It's an intuitive process."

It also allows the filmmaker the isolation in which he prefers to work, as well as a viable alternative to conventional editing tasks. "I can be totally alone in the room and just decide, almost meditatively, or some-



times in a great frenzy, what I like about the image, and pull at the image, much the way a painter would go back in and intensify something or add chiaroscuro," he explains. "The image can be altered in such a way that you can suspend the notion of ongoing time. You can actually have still images that you can rest with for a considerable period of time, which you wouldn't be allowed to, except as an extravagance, in a regular film.

"Once you have accepted the fact that this rephotography is manipulation, which usually happens in the first few minutes, then anything goes. You're allowed enormous liberties. I can even show that (a particular scene) is a faked image, collaged in. Even in Hitchcock, there's an example in *The Birds* or *Marnie* where they're rowing across a lake and you see all these horrendous black borderlines from the blue screen, but you still buy it because you've agreed to all these Hitchcock artifices."

Thanks to the commercial success of R.E.M., a band with whom the filmmaker has been associated since its origins as a post-punk Athens garage band in the early 1980s, Herbert's music videos have won wider exposure than any of his films. But being a music video director is not a career path Herbert intends to pursue. He recently turned down an offer to create a video for an up-and-coming alternative rock act, which offered him the job based on the look of an R.E.M. video he did, circa 1990. He also turned down a new video offer from R.E.M. "Something has to hit me really strong," he says. "If it had been another song, I might have done it."

On the home video compilation *R.E.M. Succumbs*, one can find Herbert's 20-plus minute "Left of Reckoning," which uses captivating rephotography to create a kind of visual dream state. Herbert takes footage of a field of homemade weather vanes on the hillside property of Gainesville, Georgia, folk artist and retired pig farmer R.A. Miller. Over this is heard several songs from the band's 1984 album, "Reckoning." Given that R.E.M.'s members, save vocalist and former art student Michael Stipe, are notoriously videophobic, it's a remarkably complementary situation, because the filmmaker is encouraged to develop a lip-synch free concept.

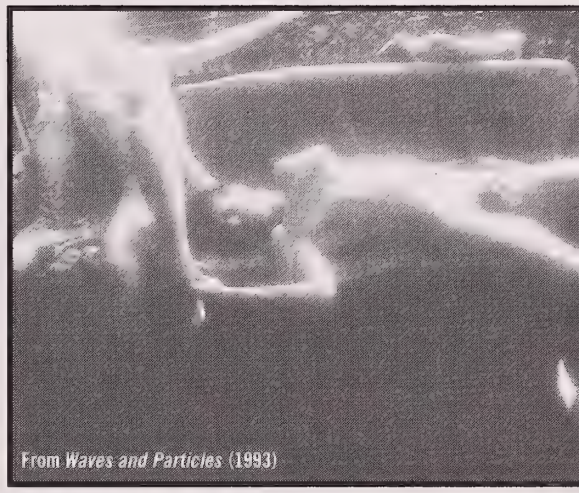
Jem Cohen was so moved by the piece that he wrote a long letter to R.E.M., thus beginning a fruitful association. "I was thrilled that someone was doing music videos that weren't lip-synced, or cut to the music, or even had the band in them," he says. "It was interesting that a band was working with an independent filmmaker. Jim's videos cut right to the heart of what R.E.M.'s music is all about. The video is more interested in the spirit of place. That's much more important than making a snappy, polished video that goes along to the song.

"I can assume that, in this day and age, someone's probably ripping off Jim Herbert's films," continues Cohen, a nonnarrative filmmaker whose latest piece for R.E.M. is the music video for "Nightswimming." "There's such a rapid turnover of images and styles and different looks in films these days, and a pillaging of the early avant-garde, that I'm sure that's happened. A lot of people don't know the difference between the original and the countless rip-offs that have come since then."

Herbert, whose videos for R.E.M. include *Driver 8*, *It's the End of the World as We Know It*, *Turn You Inside Out*, and *Life and How to Live It*, is dismissive of the form as an outlet for his work, which, despite any originality on his part, is nonetheless a case of meeting a client halfway. "I did a music video for the B-52s that was very, very elaborate," Herbert says of *Revolution Earth*, a six-minute clip that was budgeted in the low six figures and for which the filmmaker prepared an extensively detailed storyboard. Compared to the scale of a typical Herbert production, this was on par with a Cecil B. DeMille spectacle (though perhaps business as usual for MTV).

"We had zebras and elephants and acrobats from the Olympics. We were doing 70 set-ups a day, working at Carolco Studios. [We had] teenage kids pulling a boat down the street. I was able to deal with a huge, circusy situation, and felt good about doing that. I could become a gregarious director; it was actually very exciting. But you're doing this video that takes a whole lot out of your life. People going crazy on-line and off-line, and then it's on MTV once. That soured me on music videos. My own films, I don't mind not having an audience for them at all, because I don't have the obligation to produce something for that purpose. I'm happy doing the films, having three prints made, and putting them on the shelf."

"One of the things I don't like about filmmaking at all is this social interaction, of having in a predatory way to find people to be in the film," Herbert says. "I would prefer it if I lived in some sort of tribe and photographed the tribe. That's sort of what happened in the early years. In the hippie days, it was very easy to find people to be in films. Now it's more difficult, and it actually drives me to paint."

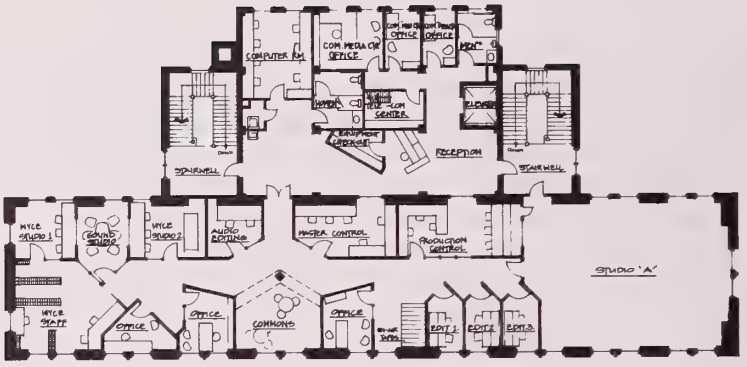

From *Waves and Particles* (1993)

Despite this aversion toward interaction outside the tribe, Herbert has been enticed by larger projects in the past two or three years. He served as director of photography on a narrative art film directed in France by rock video producer Michael Shamberg, an experience Herbert says he enjoyed. He also was briefly on board as DP for *Desperation Angels*, a pending feature film to be directed by R.E.M. associate Jim Gilroy and produced by Michael Stipe. And he thought seriously about directing a screen adaptation of Dennis Cooper's edgy, homoerotic thriller novel *Frisk*, but backed out because he was uncomfortable with the film's violence.

Though he's traveling more ("The clock is running," he says), the traditionally anchored filmmaker still prefers to work in one place. It's hard to imagine that changing. "If you live in New York, you're so connected with the scene and the hipness and the vitality of it that you're constantly bombarded with very exciting input," Herbert says. "If you're isolated, you have to dredge things up. So there is a lot of repetition and dredging, a lot of indulgence and inner journeys.... I like the idea of being some sort of hermit, so you just have the feeling that you can work without being encumbered by a lot of other images."

Herbert's work, then, can be willfully disconnected. It's not about theory or politics, though its inherent sexuality has plenty to provoke, even unintentionally, in viewers engaged in any kind of contemporary discourse on aesthetics. "Larry Kardish told me that I was very politically incorrect", Herbert says, "in that my work is non-political. He said in no sense did I have an issue I was dealing with. I think when you get into psychosexual material, it does get at particular idiosyncrasies of the individual. It does make them more critical if they put it in the realm of pornography or whatever. But you try to be voluptuous enough so everybody gives into it."

Steve Dollar writes about pop culture for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

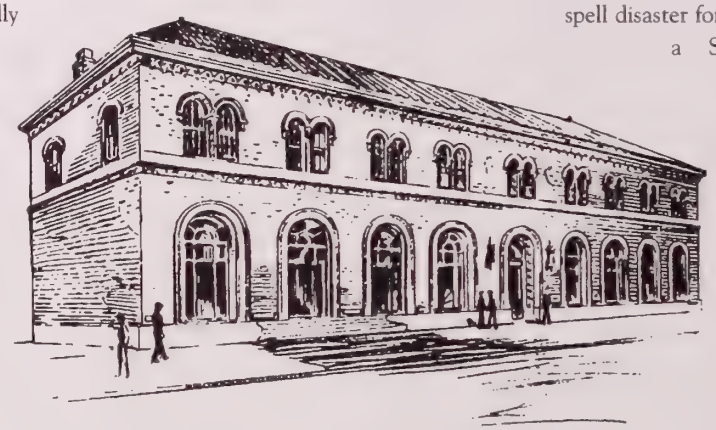


Cable Access Meets 21st Century Communications

BY BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

All over cyberspace, people are trying to get in before they're shut out. Enterprising public access centers are entering the fray. It's not easy to stake a claim in something that hardly exists, but if TCI and Time-Warner can talk visions and promises, public access can too. Access' motivations may be more public-spirited than their commercial counterparts, but ultimately they too are driven by a desire for money and power.

Here's the prospectus: Not too far into the future, public access TV will no longer be just television. Access centers will expand and become "community media centers." In addition to providing the traditional cameras, decks, and channels, public access will offer Internet access, desktop publishing, satellite teleconferencing, community voicemail, cable radio, and a host of other as-yet-technologically-unfeasible plans. With this tantalizing panoply of media tools, access centers will be able to help people make choices about "appropriate technology." Would your message be most effectively presented as a radio show, a poster, or a TV program?



For the moment, the expansion is mostly talk. Few of these new programs are actually in operation. But the talk is serious and, from a strategic standpoint, people in the access community say the time to begin building on these plans is now.

The first public indication of the shift in access priorities came two years ago when the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers changed its name to the Alliance for Community Media (ACM). In January 1994, the public access magazine *Community Television Review* followed suit and rechristened itself the *Community Media Review*. At least a half dozen access centers have already drawn up master plans for their transformation into community media centers, including those in Minneapolis, Grand Rapids, Austin, and Davis, California, among others.

In fact, the changes within public access have been in the works for years, driven by technology and business developments. As TV, phone, and computer technologies have converged, the public access community realized that the telecommunications business was going to change profoundly. It didn't take psychic powers to figure out that those changes might mean the disappearance of access' primary funding source: fees paid by cable operators. If that happens, it would spell disaster for access. The Buske Group, a Sacramento-based public interest cable consulting firm, estimates that 85 percent of all funding for access centers comes from either franchise fees (50 percent) or cable company contracts (35 percent). Many in the access community characterize this new, expanded mission as nothing less than a survival strategy.

Whether franchise fees will survive new legislation and regulation is still unclear. Some versions of telecommunications legislation currently before Congress permit the phone companies to provide video service to consumers without entering into local franchise arrangements. In the past, those local agreements have obliged cable operators to provide funding for public access. If the phone companies don't have to enter into comparable agreements, then the cable companies will be in a position to argue that they are being unfairly burdened with expensive obligations to the community. That could lead to the elimination of franchise fees altogether.

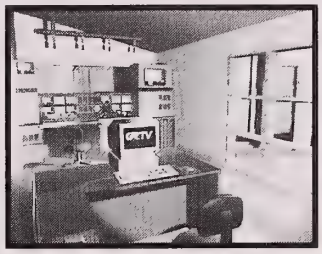
Despite the uncertainty, most access administrators don't expect to find themselves out on the street with a tin cup. In fact, they are increasingly sanguine about the government's willingness to insure a consistent funding base for public access. Another bill currently in the House (HR3636) calls for "symmetrical regulation" that would oblige the phone companies to meet the same obligations that cable operators have.

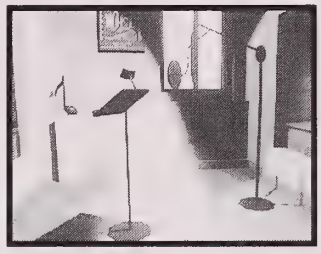
Andrew Blau, director of the Benton Foundation's Communications Policy Project, acknowledges that a consensus exists in Washington that access must be part of the National Information Infrastructure. However, that doesn't mean the battle is over, he says. ACM board chair Anthony Riddle also warns that the access community must continue to think defensively. "We can't just suck out of the same bottle because we have in the past," he says. "If anything changes, we're trying to position access in a way that we can survive."

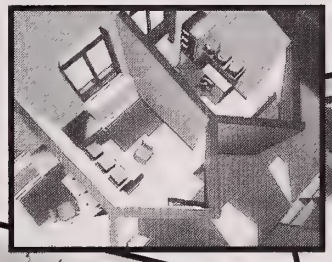
In the new telecommunications landscape, access will have to provide

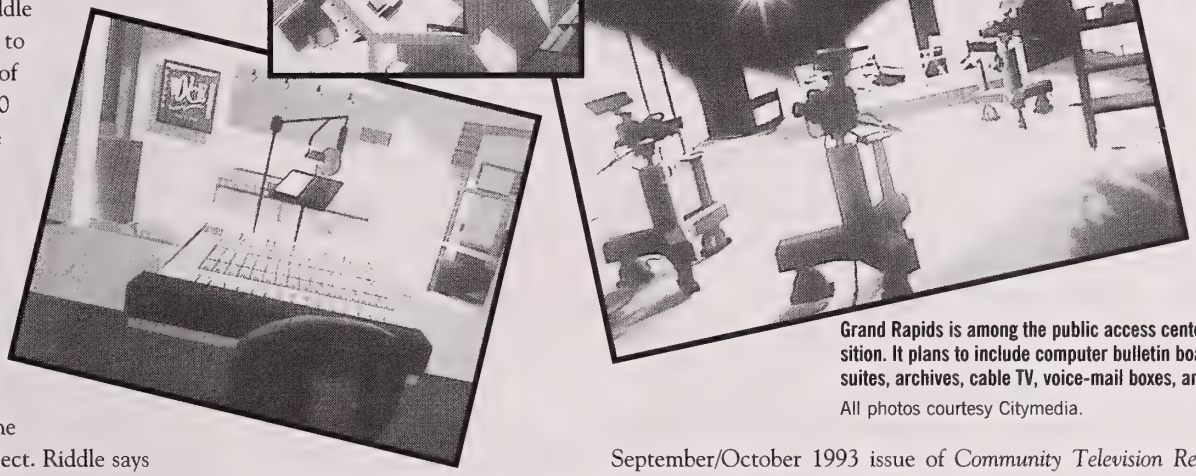
a service so valuable that the government will insist cable and phone companies finance it, and if all else fails, a service so valuable it can be supported by user fees. In a media culture in which the prevailing conception of public access has been defined by *Wayne's World*, that's no simple task. "I try to view this as an entrepreneur," says Riddle. "What we have is too important to let die. We have to provide a service that people will notice if it's gone."

While the future of operating funds for public access center is insecure, funding for project grants related to new technologies is on the rise, particularly from foundations. Riddle, who also serves as the executive director of Minneapolis Television Network (MTN), has raised over $200,000 for MTN's Internet access program. Such fundraising efforts are critical, since it may prove unwise if not illegal to use funds allocated for public access for these expanded media services. Riddle chose not to divert any of the $500,000 that the cable company contributes directly and indirectly for public access to the Internet project. Riddle says that legality was not an issue in their decision, but rather they preferred to spend the money for cable access on cable access and find new sources of funding for their new community media center projects. In Davis, California, legality was a consideration. Community groups decided to establish a separate corporation, Davis Community Network (DCN), to oversee Internet access rather than have Davis Community Television (DCTV) provide it directly. The decision was made in part because they were not sure whether they could legally apply monies from their franchise fee to Internet access, DCTV executive director and DCN president Kari Peterson explains.









Grand Rapids is among the public access centers now in transition. It plans to include computer bulletin boards, editing suites, archives, cable TV, voice-mail boxes, and cable radio.
All photos courtesy Citymedia.

Apart from sheer dollars and sense, public access administrators believe that they must stake their claim in cyberspace now. The flurry of corporate alliances among software and hardware manufacturers, regional phone companies, and cable operators, as well as the Clinton Administration's clear desire to catalyze development of the National Information Infrastructure has given a strategic urgency to access plans.

"If we don't have a voice now about how it [the National Information Infrastructure] gets created, the cost in the long run and in financial terms will be substantial," warns Carl Kucharski, executive director of St. Paul Access, which is another site planning to add media literacy programs and Internet access. Across the river in Minneapolis, Riddle urges access supporters to grab seats at the table before they're all taken. "We need to get as many people on the Internet in its current form," he says, "before someone turns it into a typical top-down system."

Although the community media center expansion has a lot of support within the Alliance for Community Media leadership, not every public access executive is behind the move. Greg Boozell, executive director of Chicago Access Corporation, expressed reservations about the development in an article that appeared in the September/October 1993 issue of *Community Television Review*. "I fear that some of us are looking to expand into new technologies and services when we haven't really learned to utilize cable television very well," Boozell wrote.

In an interview, Boozell continued to question the wisdom of access' expansion. "Who is this new audience?" he asked. "Less than 25 percent of the public has personal computers. Our constituency tends not to have computers. I believe our job is to help reconstitute the use of television from its current role as consumer pacifier and use it instead to create genuine public spaces." Chuck Sherwood, executive director of C3TV on Cape Cod, who has been among the leaders charging into cyberspace, counters Boozell's criticism. "Why should access narrow its focus?" he asks. "That's not where our culture and our society is going. It's sticking your head in the sand. Why shouldn't we be there?"

In fact, many cable access administrators believe the shift toward community media is simply an extension of access' original mission. "Although it was the advent of cable that got our centers started," says Riddle, "the real motivation has always been not to leave people communication-poor in a society where gathering information is dependent on technology. All we've ever been is a nervous system for the community, and as that nervous system evolves, we want to evolve with it and make sure that the community's voice is not lost. We're promoting the same concepts, we're just expanding our media."

Access centers in the process of expanding are establishing different programs depending on individual community needs and access center resources. Perhaps not surprisingly, the first new program to be widely established is the least technological. Many access centers—including those in Minneapolis, Portland, St. Paul, Austin, Grand Rapids, Davis, and Chicago—are integrating media literacy education into their access training programs. As Kucharski explains, media literacy—teaching about images and how the commercial media are organized—is an outgrowth of what public access has been doing for a long time, though they may have been teaching it unconsciously.

Another program currently in the works at several access centers is desktop publishing. In MTN's "cyberspace room" members can use a Mac II, Mac Plus, or an Amiga 2000 with a scanner. (Riddle notes slyly that members who have a hankering for "retrotech" can also use an IBM Selectric typewriter.) C3TV has also made desktop publishing a priority. Their second floor, which is to open in six months, is expected to include Mac, IBM, and Amiga computers. Executive director Sherwood also has grants pending that would allow them to offer CD-ROM workshops.

Providing Internet access as part of the community media center is also being widely considered, although only one such program is up and running. MTN's pilot Internet project (which received a two-year $50,000 MacArthur Foundation grant) went on-line this spring, providing public access to a small test group of nonprofit organizations. MTN hopes to have five publicly accessible terminals by mid-summer, and eventually 70 local nonprofits will have Internet access via MTN, including the City of Minneapolis/Office of Telecommunications, La Prensa de Minnesota, Main Street Theater, Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Minneapolis Police Department, Native Arts Circle, and the Virtual University. Even prior to launching their Internet pilot, MTN was producing "TV to Dial For," an interactive channel that allows viewers to use their touchtone phones to access city information, popular games, jokes, and other information on their TV screens. The channel requires the two forms of technology—television and telephone—that Riddle calls the "most transparent." It does not require either computer literacy or a computer.

Davis Community Television (DCTV) is also helping develop local Internet access. DCTV provides training, service, and community outreach to Davis Community Network, formed to provide public Internet access. The program's staged roll-out began in May with 500 members and will expand to 2,000 next fall. Terminals will be placed at public sites like community centers, schools, and libraries, and people who own computers will be able to open individual accounts.

While access centers rush to provide Internet access, commercial providers like America On-Line and Delphi are doing likewise. The difference between a commercial and a public access version of Internet is not simply cost (community media centers have not yet set rates but are committed to operating the system at break-even cost), but full and content-neutral access. Schools, for instance, may provide "limited access" in an effort to prevent students from seeking out girly pictures and other material that school administrators might not think appropriate for students. The access community will provide Internet without restriction. "We're not concerned with content," says Riddle. "We're concerned with the container."

Probably the country's most ambitious community media center is being launched in Grand Rapids by Dirk Koning, a man known in the access community as a "community media guru." Koning's community media center, the Grand Rapids Public Access Center's (GRPAC), is structured like a co-op and will provide an umbrella to existing and future community media organizations.

The mainstay of GRPAC's current operation is Grand Rapids TV, a public access center run by Koning that operates six channels. GRPAC will expand by admitting existing, independent media programs to the coop as well as by developing new programs from within.

GRPAC's expansion began three years ago when it added WYCE Radio. The previous license holder, a local high school, was letting it go, and GRPAC assumed responsibility for it. GRPAC's Archive subsequently got started when the center was given the Middletown Film Collection, an archive of 4,000 16mm films. Currently, the Grand Rapids Freenet, a computer bulletin board service and Internet node, is interested in joining the GRPAC coop. With the Freenet, GRPAC will be able to offer e-mail, access and training to computers, fax, and other computer-based services essential to the realization of a comprehensive community media center. Additional community media programs will be hatched from within. Koning is trying to make use of the cable system's institutional network. (Some cable systems have "B trunks" that link institutions within a municipality.) He intends to use those institutional links to share programming among 25 local cultural institutions, 15 of which are already wired. The institutional network also allows those 25 institutions to be linked to any of GRPAC's access channels.

Koning describes his public access facility as a "switching center" that can link institutions, individuals, and private services regardless of who owns the link. "We will be a bridging center for existing telecommunications systems," he says. "It's the aspect of this that is the least sexy, but the most fundamentally valuable."

Koning's other plans include voice-mail boxes which can be used, for instance, by social service agencies to provide voice-mail to low income and homeless people; cable radio (radio signals carried by cable which, unlike radio broadcasting, is not regulated by the FCC); and the Grand Rapids Institute for Information Democracy, an advocacy organization that will provide lobbying and policy development.

If plans like Koning's bear fruit, then community media centers will clearly begin to encroach on the traditional turf of schools, universities, social service agencies, radio stations, public libraries, and media art centers.

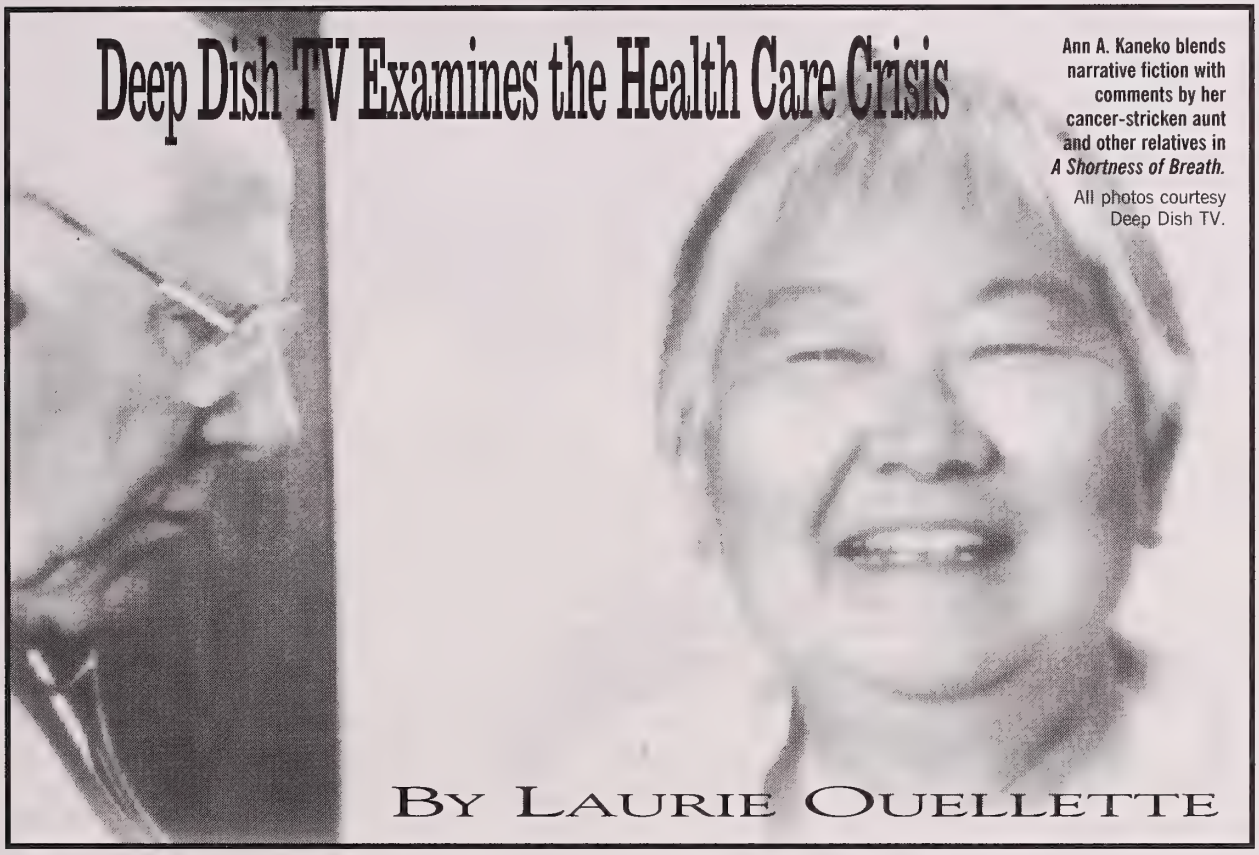
Could that lead to a turf war? For the moment, bad blood between potential competitors appears minimal. While MTN is fostering its own Internet program, so is one of the city's media arts centers, Intermedia Arts. Tom Borrup, Intermedia's executive director, speaking hypothetically, says that whether their MacArthur grant is reduced because MTN gets funding doesn't concern him. These developments, he says, can lead to collaborations and more successful fundraising. Riddle concurs, adding that the demand for access to the Internet is so high that it's "absurd" to think of MTN as the only access.

But Andrew Blau believes that turf-squabbling may be inevitable. Libraries and access centers are both talking about offering the same services, he says. In some municipalities, the library will provide them. In others, it will be the access center. But in some cases, both libraries and access centers will attempt to provide them, and then, he says, "there is either an opportunity for partnerships or a nasty catfight over funding." It seems unlikely that access centers will supersede the historic function of libraries and other public institutions, which means that the long-range future for access is still uncertain. Carl Kucharski imagines that the future looks like this: Access centers will educate organizations in the community and eventually those organizations will absorb the new services and technologies. At that point, he says, "public access will put itself out of business."

Barbara Bliss Osborn, a contributing editor to The Independent, *reports on media from Los Angeles.*

Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired

Deep Dish TV Examines the Health Care Crisis



Ann A. Kaneko blends narrative fiction with comments by her cancer-stricken aunt and other relatives in *A Shortness of Breath.*

All photos courtesy Deep Dish TV.

BY LAURIE OUELLETTE

We've heard plenty from policy makers, insurance companies, and drug manufacturers about health care. But what do the people think? Unfortunately, those whose lives will be most affected by the policies currently being hammered out in Washington have had the least say in the matter. Despite their alleged concern for "Middle America," the Clintons seem to have equated real citizen input with anecdotes and soundbites that suit their own agenda. Public opinion polls have shown consistent popular support for universal coverage, yet Congress has heard mostly from "regular folks" who have good insurance, are small-business owners, or otherwise have something to lose by changes in the status quo. The mainstream media, which has focused on the wheeling and dealing in Washington at the expense of grassroots and alternative perspectives, are equally guilty of skewing the picture.

This one-sided focus is precisely what Deep Dish TV set out to counter when the cable access network began to conceptualize its spring 1994 series on health care. The nonprofit New York-based network devoted a year to research on the subject, the bulk of it spent contacting 90 to 100 alternative health organizations, activist groups, and underrepresented communities to determine which issues were being neglected in the national debate on health care. The fruit of this labor is "Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired," a 12-part series about the health care system that is being sent out by cable satellite from May 10 through July 21 and is appeaing on public access and educational channels across the U.S. According to programming coordinator Cynthia Lopez, Deep Dish is also negotiating for the purchase of time on PBS's national satellite (similar to their handling of the *Gulf Crisis TV Project*) for broadcast on public television stations sometime in late summer.

Put together on a shoe-string budget by a staff of two overworked coordinators and a host of volunteers, "Sick and Tired" features an eclectic mix of grassroots current affairs programming, documentaries, dramatic productions, and autobiographical and experimental videos. Based on feedback from their grassroots outreach, the Deep Dish organizers identified a number of neglected issues they wanted to cover, ranging from mental health to holistic health care to environmental toxins. About half the programming was commissioned specifically for the series and was coproduced by Deep Dish. According to Lopez, the network would have liked to coproduce the entire series, but had to cut back due to inadequate funding. (Funding was tough to obtain, Lopez explains, owing to the assumption among foundations that the health care problem "would be solved in Washington"; the Public Welfare Foundation was the only major funder to come though with support.)

To supplement the new material, Lopez culled the festivals and put out a call for "underexposed" shorts (both completed videos and works-in-progress) related to health themes. In the past, all Deep Dish programs have been compilation pieces, mixing excerpts from existing videos with camcorder footage contributed by amateurs, activists, and Deep Dish producers. This series is unique in that many of the independent works will be shown

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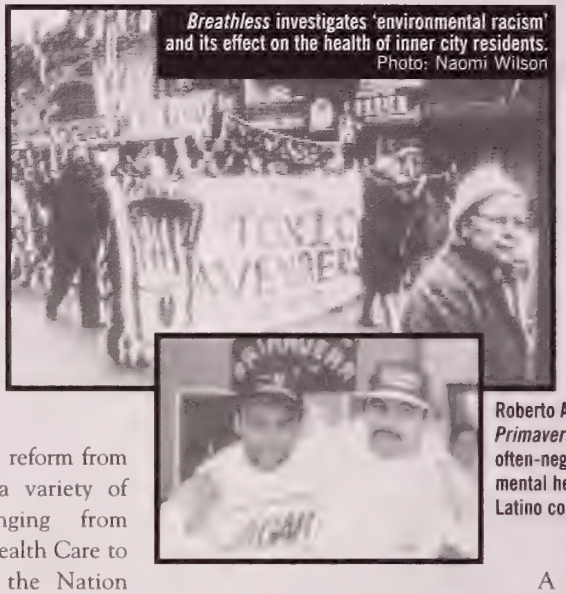
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in their entirety. Despite the make-shift impetus of this strategy, the new format actually brings more polish and aesthetic sophistication to Deep Dish's fare, and should make the series more appealing to audiences.

The styles and approaches vary considerably across each of the hour-long programs. As a whole, the series gives voice to the experiences and concerns of those marginalized by the dominant positioning of the health care crisis.

Some shows provide overviews of specific areas within the health care debate. *National Health Emergency: An Activist Survey*, coproduced by Cindy Nelson and Deep Dish, presents an analysis of health care reform from the perspectives of a variety of activist groups—ranging from Nurses for National Health Care to Single Payer across the Nation (SPAN)—who rarely get airtime on mainstream TV news. Besides presenting convincing arguments for universal coverage, these overlooked experts debunk the counterarguments of hospitals, drug companies, and other opponents. Video segments culled from independent and access producers around the country round out the program by illustrating successful local models for a comprehensive health care plan. In *High Tech Baby Making: North and South*, coproduced by Kathy High, Harriet Hirshorn, and Deep Dish, the consequences of so-called technological "advances" in female reproduction (such as in vitro fertilization and forced sterilization) are scrutinized through interviews with sociologists, scientists, and women in industrial and Third World countries.

In an effort to bring diversity to the health care debate, a number of programs were intended to be "race specific", says Lopez. *Doing What It Takes: Black Folks Getting and Staying Healthy*, coproduced by Not Channel Zero and Deep Dish, explores how lack of access to affordable health care and a history of abuse have led people of color to distrust the mainstream medical establishment. With historical research and unusual aesthetic techniques (such as appropriating and distorting archival and mainstream media footage), the producers examine the political, economic, and racial barriers that prevent African Americans from getting and staying healthy. The program also highlights alternative health practices in various communities of color. The documentary *He Wo Un Poh: Recovery in Native America*, by Beverly Singer, explores the root causes and social impact of alcoholism and substance abuse among Native communities from their own perspective. Personal interviews and stories give voice to the painful consequences of genocide and the path toward spirituality and recovery.



Breathless **investigates 'environmental racism' and its effect on the health of inner city residents.** Photo: Naomi Wilson

Roberto Arevalo's *Casa Primavera* explores the often-neglected issue of mental health care in the Latino community.

Among the series' most haunting works are the experimental shorts, most of which are personal expressions based on the experiences of the creators.

A blend of fiction and autobiography, Michael O'Riley's *The Glass Jaw* chronicles the videomaker's pistol whipping, emergency brain surgery, and emotionally-draining recovery. Made with a Pixelvision PXL200 camera, O'Riley's black-and-white video makes strange the daily experience of medicalization with unusual shots of ordinary imagery, while the filmmaker's candid commentary exposes the medical establishment as a cold and depersonalized institution. Along similar lines, a trilogy of works by Julie Puzon on women and disability combine personal experience with staged material, abstract imagery, and experimental forms. In *Chairs*, disabled women (perhaps the least represented group on television) speak candidly on camera about their physical and sexual selves. *The Unfinished Symphony*, which juxtaposes footage of surgery with images of cannibalistic surgeons and a chef cooking meat, is a horrifying account of Puzon's own spinal fusion operation. In *The Reconstruction*, Puzon uses the sounds of building construction and shots of medical equipment to depict the medical industry as inhumane and oppressive.

Other independent shorts use narrative fiction, one of the most successful yet least utilized genres in grassroots media, to convey powerful messages about health issues. *Reunion*, produced by AIDS Films, is an emotional drama that explores the impact of HIV/AIDS on the lives of three African American brothers who come together on a weekend family visit. When the older brother reveals that he is

HIV-positive, the family members are forced to examine their own safe sex practices as well as the impact of the AIDS epidemic on their relationships with their partners. In *A Shortness of Breath*, produced by Ann A. Kaneko, the filmmaker juxtaposes the fictional story of a young woman who is terminally ill with comments by her parents and aunt (who is battling cancer) on such topics as heaven, religion, and death.

Several videos combine investigative journalism with community activism. In the cinema verité video *Crack Clouds Over Hell's Kitchen*, produced by the Educational Video Center, high school students take their low-end video cameras to a crack park in New York City's infamous "Hell's Kitchen" neighborhood. The students interview dealers and crack users about the impact of drugs and addiction on their personal lives. The people interviewed present a candid and often chilling portrait of inner-city substance abuse, and they begin to address some of the social and individual factors that have led to their current situations. *Breathless*, produced by Cathy Scott, Susan Levine, and Paper Tiger Television, investigates the reasons cities seem to build garbage incinerators only in low-income, disenfranchised neighborhoods. The video exposes the many ways "environmental racism" has endangered the health of of inner-city people and calls for greater activist attention to the complex economic, social, and political factors contributing to the problem.

Other programs in the "Sick and Tired" series—which was produced for less money than it takes to make a 30-second commercial—address such topics as lesbian health care, breast cancer, holistic health care in the black community, community-based mental health programs, and the mistreatment of prisoners. While the series lacks the slick feel of commercial television, the diversity in form and content suggests the potential of multicultural, grassroots television at its best. In moving into more accessible formats, such as narrative and documentary, the series should bring new information and viewpoints to a broader range of TV viewers. The impact of these tapes will ultimately extend far beyond a single television broadcast, however. In combining outreach with television production, Deep Dish has introduced the idea of self-representation to both activists and marginalized peoples interested in the politics of health care. This link to organizing, combined with the complete dearth of alternative media coverage on health issues, should ensure an afterlife for "Sick and Tired" in both alternative video and health care politics.

Laurie Ouellette is a media critic and doctoral student in communication at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.



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Kenneth Anger was on hand at Filmforum for a screening of his 1954 work, *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*.

All photos courtesy Film Forum

Independents in L.A. Scratching the Belly of the Beast

BY JESSE LERNER



***Ramona: Birth of a mis-ce-ge-Nation* works to dismantle mass media stereotypes, beginning with D.W. Griffith's short *Ramona*.**

Independent filmmaking in Los Angeles, perhaps more than anywhere else, inevitably enters into a relationship with the mainstream film industry that dominates the local economy. Conventional wisdom posits this relationship as one of diametric opposites or "radical otherness," as avant-garde champion P. Adams Sitney wrote in 1979 in his influential book, *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde*.

"Scratching the Belly of the Beast: Cutting-Edge Media in Los Angeles, 1922-94," is an aptly titled survey of alternative film production in Los Angeles. It reveals a relationship to Hollywood that is much more complex, one marked by mutual concerns, shared resources, and reciprocal influences. Over 150 films and videos were presented in this ambitious seven-week series (held February 10-March 31), which spanned seven decades, from the 1922 adaptation of Oscar Wilde's *Salome* to Gregg Araki's fresh-from-the-lab *Totally F***ed Up*. Organized by Filmforum, the local showcase of experimental and progressive media, this celebration featured guest-curated programs, tributes to organizations that have supported alternative media in Los Angeles, a selection of important independent features, and roundtables on the future of the alternative film sector in Los Angeles. Programs were organized around a variety of themes, including geography and the body, ethnicity, time period, and medium.

What the series revealed is that independents who get close enough to Hollywood to scratch the belly of the beast can be many things—irritant, stimulant, source of pleasure. Contrary to Sitney's claim that these two types of filmmaking "operate in different realms with next to no significant influence on each other," this retrospective was important for excavating a significant and ambivalent dialogue between them. It revealed numerous instances of what guest curator David James termed independents' "more or less explicit, more or less allegorically

displaced envisionings of Hollywood and their own relationship to it."

Strategies for negotiating this relationship are nearly as numerous as the independent film- and videomakers in the region. Kenneth Anger, for example, worked as a child actor in several Hollywood features and subsequently had an enduring fascination with the industry. This is evident in his films and in his raunchy chronicles of the misadventures of movie idols, published as the book *Hollywood Babylon*. Anger was on hand during the event, acting as master of ceremonies at the closing party, which included a screening of his underground film bacchanalia *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* (1954). Anger's peculiar relationship with Hollywood was on view in *Puce Moment* (1949), a campy evocation of a glamorous past through the allure of an elegant starlet of ambiguous gender.

Another sort of engagement with the industry was suggested by those experimentalists who work with found footage. Two playful examples were Peter Mays' *Death of the Gorilla* (1966) and Chick Strand's *Cartoon le Mousse* (1979), which incorporates cartoons, jungle adventure films, sitcoms, and other flotsam and jetsam from commercial television. Plundering the commercial film industry for the building blocks of their work, Mays and Strand radically recontextualize the source material, altering the meaning of this industrial product.

Morgan Fisher also appropriates footage in *Standard Gauge* (1984), but uses it as a prop for personal reminiscences about former film jobs and other brushes with the industry. Employing a single, long take of a light table, Fisher holds up various scraps of film stock collected over the years. His anecdotes about each piece of film articulate a relationship to the Hollywood mainstream that is long-lasting, affectionate, intelligent, and unresolved. Like many independents, Fisher was dependent on the industry for his livelihood at certain points in his career. As he displays film scraps, he relates his experiences as editor on the low-budget feature *The Student Nurses*, a Roger Corman production, and as a bit player in another schlock production, *Blood Virgin*. One fragment inspires Fisher to speak at length about the work of Viennese emigré director Edgar G. Ulmer, especially his minimalist 1946 masterpiece, *Detour* (played on a rear projection screen). While Ulmer's unornamented narrative is hardly standard Hollywood product, Fisher's tribute suggests that the margins of the industry allow for, and sometimes necessitate, a degree of experimentation impossible with bigger budgets. Through these scraps of footage and the thoughts they inspire, a relationship to Hollywood much more complex than "radical otherness" emerges.

While these filmmakers from the overwhelmingly Anglo avant-garde community display an ambivalent relation to commercial film production, those from the so-called "minority" communities that make-up the majority of Los Angeles' population must negotiate a different sort of position. Historically, the portrayal of nonwhites in Hollywood films has been a shamefully one-dimensional parade of caricatures, leading media critic O.Funmilayo Makarah to ask pointedly in the exhibition catalog, "Is there a reason a black woman [always appears] in the kitchen?" In contrast with these myopic portrayals, alternative representations reflect the complexity and real concerns of these communities.

Guest curator Christopher Ortiz, for example, begins his survey "Latinos/as in the Imagination of Southern California" with a sample of this kind of stereotypical depiction: D. W. Griffith's 1910 short film *Ramona*, the story of tragic love between a mestiza and a native American in nineteenth century California. Over 80 years later, David Avalos, Deborah Small, William Franco, and Miki Seifert attempt to deconstruct this cliché with their videotape *Ramona: Birth of a mis-ce-ge-NATION* (1992), which incorporates excerpts from Griffith's film and numerous Hollywood depictions of racially mixed couples. Other mediamakers combat the hackneyed and insulting portrayals in mainstream films by providing more sophisticated treatments. The series included, among others, Edgar Bravo's short *Mi Casa* (1989) and Charles Burnett's masterful *Killer of Sheep* (1977).

As a student, Burnett was among those independent media mavericks who were trained at UCLA's short-lived Ethnocommunications Film Production Department, which lasted from 1968 to 1975. Sylvia Morales, Billy Woodberry, Robert Nakamura, and Montezuma Esparsa also came out of this department, and all went on to create work that challenges stereotypical images of nonwhites. While the university showed little commitment to the program, probably viewing it as a concession to the civil rights movement, it left a lasting legacy, launching filmmakers' careers and spawning such institutions as Visual Communications, the Asian Pacific American media arts center in Los Angeles.

Many works from the late sixties and early seventies are steeped in a rhetoric and aesthetic that today feel like artifacts from a bygone age. But this is not to say they've lost their relevance. Take, for example, Duane Kubo's *Cruisin' J-Town* (1975), a documentary on the Japanese-American fusion band Hiroshima. The film concludes with a jam session during which the band plays alongside members of El Teatro Campesino, performing *nueva canción*—Latin American leftist folk songs—on koto and traditional Japanese drums. Given the endemic tensions that have marked Los Angeles in the last few years, this image of crosscultural musical fusion seems more relevant today than ever.



***Cruisin' J-Town*, Duane Kubo's 1975 documentary on the Japanese-American fusion band Hiroshima, is still relevant today.**

"Scratching the Belly"'s three roundtable discussions focused on prospects for independent media in Los Angeles in the much anticipated era of the information superhighway. Like many media artists, the panelists questioned whether digital technology promised greater exposure for their work or further marginalization, and how that exposure might be assured through legislation or activism. While there were no certain answers, the enthusiastic participation and collective strategies of Los Angeles mediamakers are encouraging signs. Southern California independents will no doubt continue scratching the belly of the beast, in whatever form it takes, producing important and challenging work for at least another seven decades.

Jesse Lerner, a documentary filmmaker based in Los Angeles, is currently working on his first feature, Fronterilandia, *a binational experimental pastiche.*

A MEETING OF MINDS

BLACK CINEMA

(a celebration of pan-african film)

BY JAMIKA AJALON

"This is a one-time, historic event," said Steven Sills, coordinator of Black Cinema: A Celebration of Pan-African Film. "This conference is more than just a film festival."



Ousmane Sembène (left), pictured here with Ngugi Wa Thiongo and Manthia Diawara, gave the closing remarks at this year's conference. Courtesy Manthia Diawara.

Indeed it was. The week-long event, held March 22-30 at New York University (NYU), featured over 80 scholars and filmmakers from the U.S., United Kingdom, Africa, and other parts of the world who gathered to discuss the direction of black cinema across the diaspora. The idea of having scholars and filmmakers come together at one conference, explained Sills, was conceptualized about two years ago by cultural critic and Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Mary Schmit Campbell, dean of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. With of the help of a planning committee that included Manthia Diawara, director of the African Studies Program at NYU, and Warrington Hudlin from Black Filmmaker Foundation, this meeting of minds materialized.

Each day approximately over 400 people—a mix of filmmakers, students, educators, writers, and press—crowded in to the conference events. Alongside the 15 or so panel discussions, grouped under two headings "The Scholar's Perspective" and "The Artists' Perspective," was a slate of almost 50 films. These included American classics like Oscar Micheaux's *Murder in Harlem*, Melvin Van Peebles' *Sweet Sweetback's Baadassss Song*, Charles Burnett's *Killer of Sheep*, NYU alumnus Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*, Kathleen Collin's *Losing Ground*, plus films from the black British workshops and five features by the "father of African film," Burkina Faso director Ousmane Sembene. The septuagenarian filmmaker was in town to give the conference's closing remarks, followed by a premiere of the documentary *Sembene: A Biography*. (In the weeks that followed, more African films could be seen uptown at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater, where the second annual Ancient Nights African Film Festival took place from April 8-24.)

The panels often meshed scholarly critique with comments on practical problems in film and video production. Much of the discussion centered on how to ensure the development and visibility of black cinema. The main themes running throughout the conference were: What is "black cinema?" Who has the "right" to make films about black subjects? Where are the black women filmmakers? In addition, much discussion centered around issues of film production and distribution, the information superhighway, and the diversification of black film.

"I am rich, because I have seen my vision of a movement by black people to provide productive and self-defined images in cinema coming fully to life here," said Harry Belafonte the first day of the conference. This idea of self-representation was strongly repeated through the conference by both U.S. and foreign speakers.

Among them was Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka, who gave the keynote address. Despite little publicity in the mainstream media, a continuous line of people filtered in to hear this Nigerian writer eloquently describe the plight of filmmakers across the diaspora. Speaking of the "absence of an authentic reality" in most mainstream media representations of Africa, he insisted that "the Western portrayal of the African must be rigorously interrogated and contested." Soyinka urged black filmmakers to seize history and put it in their own hands.

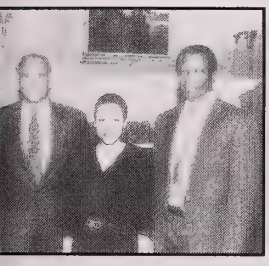
Similarly, a common thread linking U.S. scholars and filmmakers was their exhortation to deconstruct existing film images in order to reclaim them and make them "our own." As cinematographer (*Daughters of the Dust*, *Malcolm X*) and filmmaker Arthur Jafa noted during the panel on Black Aesthetics, "The process of actualizing black film is clearly a process of looking at the structures and perimeters of cinema as it exists, studying the relationship between what [images and structures] we have and how they are related to Western philosophical traditions, and using this as a basis to speculate about some other kinds of possibilities surrounding cinema." Jafa continued more colloquially, "We are still in the infancy of black cinema. I do believe we will be a dominant factor in the next century if we, you know, funk it up."

Self-representation and holding onto history through film was one of the big issues addressed during the panel Whose Black Film Is It Anyway? With a lineup that included directors

Spike Lee, Bill Duke, and Jonathan Demme, critic Joel Siegel, and novelist and playwright Ishmael Reed, this panel attracted an overflow crowd of almost 700, with many people turned away at the door. Moderator Kinshasha Conwill, director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, skillfully led the panelists through a thorny thicket of issues surrounding the question of whether white individuals should make films about black subjects and vice versa.

"I never said black people should do only black films and white people should only do white films," said Spike Lee. "But there *are* specific cases when it is called for," he said, citing the case of *Malcolm X*, a project Norman Jewison was originally supposed to direct, but which Lee persuaded the director and studio to turn over to him.

Ishmael Reed said Steven Spielberg's *The Color Purple* was a perfect example of why whites shouldn't direct black films, claiming it turned black men into monsters. "I think that African American misogyny is a big problem," he acknowledged. "I see myself as a liberated man," he noted, adding, "I think the African American male has been singled out [for sexist behavior]... I'd like to see Spielberg do a movie about the abuse of Jewish women by Jewish men. Some of these other guys should have to pay, too. Black men can't take the fall."



Black Cinema: A Celebration of Pan-African Film. Courtesy NYU.

Ishmael's "I am a liberated man" response and Spike Lee's admission that he needed to "go to the woodshed" to process through issues surrounding sexism left many women in the audience dissatisfied. How is sexism in black film and culture to be addressed, they wanted to know, and where *do* black women fit into the film industry?

Women's frequently heard complaints that hip-hop homeboy films are synonymous with black filmmaking were echoed on the all-male panel on the Aesthetics of Black Film. Tricia Rose, professor of African Studies at NYU, questioned the notion of a black aesthetic when masculinity is used as a general model. "How can we distinguish between a black aesthetic in general and a black masculinist aesthetic," she asked, "and how do we have access to a black women's aesthetic in relation to that?"

Gloria Gibson-Hudson, assistant professor of Afro-American Studies and assistant director of the Black Film Center Archive at Indiana University, gave some clue as to why this issue is so hard to deal with. During the panel on Black Women's Film, she rattled off a list of

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unknown black women filmmakers throughout history. Among the "first mothers of film," she listed Zora Neale Hurston and Paul Robeson's wife. After each name she asked, "Where is the footage?" As an example of black women's history that has been lost and forgotten, she showed footage from *Hell Bound Train*, a semi-evangelistic short by the late director and editor Eloise Gist that depicts the consequences suffered by adulterers.

Women were not the only ones who longed to see a diversification of black cinema. Spike Lee also asserted, "We need to diversify our films, or the nineties will end up being like the blacksploitation era of the seventies." Unfortunately, diversity within the conference was limited to straight blacks, for the most part, with little representation from the large contingent of black gay and lesbian filmmakers. Only one session dealt specifically with black gay film: UK filmmaker Isaac Julien presented a paper on "Race Power & Pleasure: Sadomasochism and Politics of Phantasy in Recent Black Gay Film and Photography by Kobena Mercer." Interestingly, his audience was largely white.

The issue of diversity within the black community took center stage at the Conference Round Table toward the event's closing. It materialized in the dispute between cultural critic bell hooks and jazz critic Stanley Crouch over whether it was appropriate for hooks to quote hip-hop artist Snoop Doggy Dog. Crouch saw Snoop as "brutal" and a "virus" to the community. hooks responded by quoting Snoop: "I don't rap i just talk i want to conversate with my people." She then moved that the critical work she does is a way of "conversating" with her people.

Talking about our differences, whether class, culture, or color, and learning how to relate to each other across these lines was the main focus of the roundtable. Panelist and cultural theorist Stuart Hall suggested that this kind of discussion is exactly the sort of thing that should have dominated the entire conference. Next time, he suggested, "we spend one day rejoicing about how talented we are and how good it is to be together, and the rest of the time discussing our differences."

Many thought this session uplifting. "It would have been better to start the conference with this panel, rather than have it at the end," said British filmmaker John Akomfrah, who believed this would have led to a more constructive discourse. Overall, it seemed that most people left the conference positively motivated and ready to follow Wole Soyinka's message, to "roll and keep on rolling."

Jamika Ajalon is a filmmaker and freelance writer living in New York.

BY KATHRYN BOWSER



THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER, DIRECTOR OF THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. AS SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT THE FIVF FESTIVAL BUREAU WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

DOMESTIC

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 14-16, FL. Florida's oldest fest showcases ind. work from all around country. Cats: narrative, doc, animation, experimental. Cash awards to winning film/video in each cat. Entry fees: $15-25. Preview on VHS; formats: S8, 16mm, 35mm, 1/2", 3/4", Hi8. Deadline: July 23. For entry forms, contact: Central Florida Film/Video Festival, c/o Jason Neff, 15-1/2 n. Eola Dr. #5, Orlanda, FL 32801; (407) 839-6045 or (407) 331-7366.

CHICAGO LESBIAN & GAY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-13, Chicago. 2nd oldest fest of its kind screens wide variety of int'l lesbian & gay film & video. Attended by 10,000. Takes place at Music Box Theater (750 seats) & Chicago Filmmakers' 200-seat theater. Fest offers exposure & potential follow-up engagements at Music Box. Deadline: July 22. Formats: 16mm, 35mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Contact: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division St., Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 384-5533; fax: 5532.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, November, NY. Producers & distributors of films & videos on all types of dance are eligible to submit prods. Entries must not have been shown at previous Dance on Camera fests, produced after 1991 & must have or be about to obtain distributor. Entry fees: $15-$50, depending on length. DFA members receive 20 percent discount. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Susan Braun, exec. director, Dance Films Association, Inc., 31 W. 21st St., 3rd fl., NY, NY 10011; (212) 727-0764.

DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 10-13, TX. Presented by Video Assoc. of Dallas & Dallas Museum of Art, fest is largest video fest in US. Fest offers programs such as KidVid, broad look at current work by nat'l & int'l producers, and Texas Show, featuring new work by Texas artists. All video formats, incl. installations & interactive programs in the interActive Zone. Entry fee: $15. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Dallas Video Festival, Video Association of Dallas, 215A Henry St., Dallas, TX 75208; (214) 651-TVTV; fax: 8896; e-mail: VBart@aol.com.

INTERNATIONAL FILM & TELEVISION FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK, Jan., NY. Int'l awards competition for achievements in broadcast & non-broadcast medi. Entries must have been produced, released, or aired after Aug. 3, 1993. Competition cats: promotion spots/openings & IDs (e.g. news promotion, entertainment or sports program promo); TV news programs (e.g. newscast doc/special, public affairs, news magazine) & inserts (e.g. breaking news story, special report, human interest); TV doc & info programs (e.g. arts, biography, cultural issues, environment/ecology, politics, science & technology); sponsored programming, TV entertainment programs, TV entertainment specials, children's programming, music videos. Craft cats in each cat. Entry fees: $100-$375. Format: 3/4", 1/2"; film not accepted). Deadline: Aug. 3 (programs), Sept. 13 (promotion spots). Contact: New York Festivals, 655 Ave. of Americas, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10010; (914) 238-4481.

PRIZED PIECES INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, Nov., OH. Competition, in 14th yr., honors excellence in TV & film prod. that affirms universal experience of Africans & African Americans. Program cats incl. public affairs news; youth/teens; drama (black people cast in primary & subordinate roles); doc; music videos; promotional shorts & content cat. shorts (programs between 3-20 min. which may be in any cat. excluding music videos). Special prizes incl. best African/Diaspora ind. producer; Oscar Micheaux Award (honoring African-American media professionals whose works & spirit most closely embody those of Micheaux); best student filmmaker/videographer. Entries must not have been previously entered in competition & must have aired, exhibited or produced for broadcast between Sept. 1, 1992 & Aug. 1, 1993. Int'l entries by ind. producers from African countries eligible & must have been produced in preceding 3 yrs. Formats; 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fees: $35 ind. producers; fee waived for NBPC members. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Nat'l Black Programming Consortium, 929 Harrison Ave., Ste. 101, Columbus, OH 43215; (614) 299-5355; fax: 4761.

VIRGINIA FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN FILM, Octobe 27-30, VA. Ind. films are major focus of this fest now in its 7th yr. Fest "provides filmmakers, scholars, students, performers & public w/ multidisciplinary look at American film. New features, shorts & docs accepted. Eligibility limited to American films completed after Sept. 1993. Fest also features events that honor history of American film. Entry fee: $30. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: director of programming, Virginia Festival of American Film, P.O. Box 3697, 104 Midmont Lane, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903; (804) 982-5277; fax: 5297; e-mail: filmfest@virginia.edu.

FOREIGN

AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL Dec. 7-15, Netherlands. Now in 7th yr., fest programs about 25 docs in competition & nearly 100 in retros & series. Competition winner receives Joris Ivens Award ($6,000). Program also features "Top 10" program, in which renowned filmmakers choose favorate docs & seminars, workshops & talk shows. 35,000 attend. Video section inaugurated last yr. Forum section, a market for int'l cofinancing of docs, begun last yr, w/ 77 docs presented to 83 broadcasters repping 44 major channels. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: IDFA, Kleine -Gartmanplantsoen 10, 1017 rr Amsterdam, Netherlands; tel: 31 20 627 3329; fax: 31 20 638 5388.

BAHIA INTERNATIONAL MARKET FOR INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO, Sept. 9-15, Brazil. Held in Salvador, Bahia during 21st Jornada Internacional de Cinema da Baia (which focuses on prods from Latin America, Portugal, Spain & Portuguese-speaking Africa, this yr accepting int'l films with Latin Amer. subjects); market's objective is to "create an alternative space for the commercialization & int'l distribution of experimental & ind. film & video prods." Films must be on 1/2" w/ max. length of 60 min. Entry fee: $20 (for up to 3 works under 60 min.). Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Mercado Internacional de Film & Video, Av. Araujo Pinho, 32, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil CEP 40 110 150; 55 71 336 91 06; fax: 55 71 336 92 99.

FLANDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF GHENT, October, Belgium. Audiences of over 50,000 annually attend fest, now celebrating its 21st yr, which focuses on "Impact of Music in Film" & shows about 130 works. Films w/out Belgian distributor welcome. Competition focuses on film music (best film award of about $82,000). Sections: Official Section incl. Competition (Impact of Music on Film) that awards Best Film & Best Aplication of Music (Georges Delerve Award); Out of Competition; Country Focus; Film spectrum (int'l films receiving Belgium premieres). Competing films must be at least 60 min. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm w/ optical or magnet sound &/or Dolby, SR, TX, or CDs. Deadline: mid-August. Contact: Jacques Dubrulle, Int'l Flanders Film Festival-Ghent, 1104 Kortrijksesteenweg, B-9051 Ghent, Belgium; tel: 32 9221 8946; fax: 32 9221-9074.

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 25 - Feb. 5/Cinemart Jan. 30 - Feb. 2, Netherlands. Noncompetitive fest has reputation for programming innovative works alongside more commercial prods. Programs around 250 films, incl. long & short features, docs & videos of all genres. Main program has premieres plus critical successes from other fests. Audiences approach 200,000. Int'l filmmakers & press invited as fest guests. Nat'l & int'l press coverage is extensive. FIPRESCI Jury presents Int'l Press Award to favorite film. Concurrent film market (Cinemart) avail. to filmmakers, producers, TV networks, funds, banks & ind. distributors (contact: Wouter Barendrecht). Hubert Baals Fund supports film projects from 3rd world countries in all stages of prod, w/ grants of up to $50,000 (contact: Sandra den Hamer). Deadlines: Nov. 1; Cinemart: Oct 1. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. for fest entires, contact: Film Festival Rotterdam, PO Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, Netherlands; tel: 3110 411 8080; fax: 3110 413 5132.

ST. JOHNS INT'L WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-16, Canada. 5th annual fest open to films/videos (shorts, features, docs) directed, written, or produced by a woman & completed after Sept. '92. No entry fee. Deadline: July 15, 1994. For details: St. John's Women's Film & Video Festival, PO Box 984, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada A1C 6C2; (709) 772-0358; fax: 4808.

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FREELANCE WRITERS, photographers wanted to form bi-monthly newsletter devoted to ind. film- & videomakers. Strong tech background preferred. Aiming to help young, inner-city artists find prod. & postprod. houses, equipment, etc. Contact: Reginald Robinson, Visionary Prods., 1600 Sedgwick Ave., Apt. 9E, Bronx, NY 10453.

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PRODUCER Martha Davies seeking crew for *Amazonia*, Roberto Monticello's sequel to award winner *Carribean*. Coproduced by Brazil's TV Globo. Feature about couple working out troubles. J. Cuevas, c/o Roberto Monticello, PO Box 372, NY, NY 10014.

SEEKING FOOTAGE OF NEWARK, NJ: Blackside, award-winning ind. doc film company, is looking for footage of people, places & events in Newark between 1964 & 1970 for PBS program on America's war on poverty. Call (617) 536-6900, ext. 202 between 9 am & 5 pm or fax: (617) 536-1732.

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STAFF & CREW for Roberto Monticello's *The Rights of Others*, syndicated TV series about human- & animal-rights activists. Also, editors for recently completed *Realities*. Lisa Landis, producer, c/o R. Monticello, PO Box 372, NY, NY 10014. Union/nonunion.

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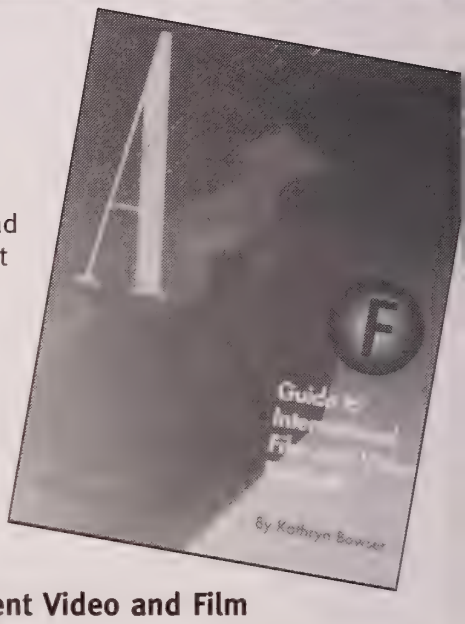
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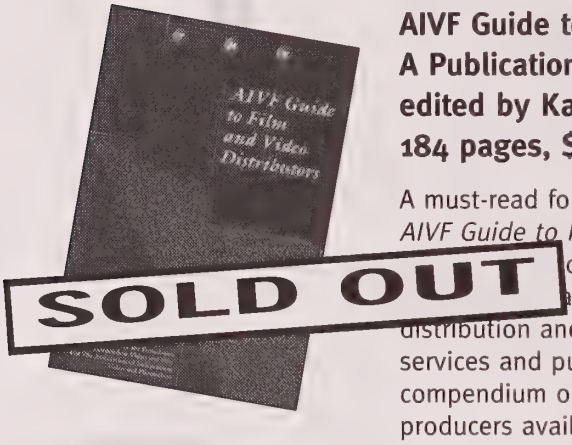
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BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION, seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, at (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o *Screen* Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS accepts features, shorts, animated, experimental, or docs of exceptional quality for Cinematheque program. Student works not accepted. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Ron Beattie, Center for Contemporary Arts, 291 E. Barcelona Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE, 1/2-hour, monthly news & public affairs program, shown on public-access stations across country, is looking for footage or produced pieces (1-30 min.) on Central America, Cuba & Haiti (especially Haiti, Salvadoran elections, return of Guatamalan refugees from Mexico). Also looking for someone in D.C. to tape interviews for show. Can't pay, but can cover costs of tape & mailing. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COLLECTING COLLECTORS, video screening series that celebrates people w/ passion for collecting, seeks everything from unedited tapes to feature films. Send VHS tape w/ SASE & description to: Danny Leonard, media arts coordinator, Center for Creative Work, 425 Bush St., ste. 425, San Francisco, CA 94108; (510) 527-4814.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work

in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENTS seeks film & video shorts (under 20 min.) in all genres, formats for D.C. "ind. showcase" program. Possible deferred payment. Send VHS or 3/4" copy (returnable w/ SASE) to: 1812 Ingleside Terrace N.W., ste #5, Washington D.C. 20010; (202) 232-5934.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

THE EDGE, Denver-based media collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres considered. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FEEDBACK, anthology cable-access program of ind. work, is accepting work on 3/4", 1/2" or Hi-8. Send tape & SASE to: N.A.M.E. Gallery, Attn. Video Commitee, 700 North Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), award-winning cable-access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred. No nudity.) Videos credited. Tapes returned. Mail to: Fem TV, PO Box 66604, Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FIFTEEN MINUTES, Wash. D.C. nightclub, seeks videos & films for screening & performance events. Fees to artists. Accepts 16mm, VHS, S-VHS & Hi-8. Also looking for ambient video. FFI: Eric Gravley, 15 Minutes, 1030 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 677-5643.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, ste. 4768, NY, NY 10112.

FILMS/VIDEOS/SCRIPTS wanted by ind. prod. company. Seek work by new artists & seasoned makers. All genres reviewed. Deadline: Aug. 3. Send completed work, samples, synopses, scene format, release forms & $25 filing fee to: Bell Warner Films, SF Professional Bldg., ste. 110-114, Boca Raton, FL 33428; fax: (407) 482-1121. Fees paid.

FLICKTURES seeks comedy shorts (under 10 min.) in all comedy styles/genres to air on LA cable access. Future distribution package may provide possible deferred pay. Send submissions (3/4" preferred) & SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods., 572 1/2 S. Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

HOME GIRL PRODUCTIONS, consortium of women filmmakers, seeks home movies from lesbians for possible inclusion in feature-length film. Proceeds from film will go to creation of lesbian film fund. Send inquiries or movies to: Home Girl Productions, 662 North Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW DAY FILMS, ind. media producers working w/ common vision, seeks energetic new members w/ challenging social issue docs for distribution to nontheatrical markets. Deadline: Sept 1. Call (415) 332-2577.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. We are committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, invitational fest in 5th yr. at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding reference file of dedicated S-8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length in S-8, who have prints (not just originals). Fest has traveled to Brussels & may reach Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Paris, etc., in 1994. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 w/ file folder of support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, S-8 filmography, stills, photo of yourself (w/ name, address, phone) & description of films. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, guest curator, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

OPEN WIDE, weekly, half-hour TV series produced by CBC Manitoba that profiles best of alternative, underground & ind. cinema from Canada, US & world, seeks submissions. Looking for experimental, video art, comedy, drama, animation, docs & music videos between 30 sec. & 20 min. Submissions on 16mm, VHS, Hi-8, 3/4", 1/2" or video. Film/video associations & distribs. should send catalogs w/ submissions. License fee paid if selected for broadcast.

Submissions may be in any language from any time. Will acknowledge submission w/in 10 days. Send to: *Open Wide*, CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2G1, Attn: Shipping Dept.; (204) 788-3111, Gavin Rich, producer.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series, seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatamala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, executive producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta 8mm, super 8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303)-698-1841.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit resumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE SECOND WAVE, coprod. of Sagebrush Productions (LA/Wyoming) & Women Make Movies (NY), seeks materials on women's movement for series. W/ 4 1-hr. programs covering 30-yr. period from 1960 to 1990, series will present accurate record of events & ideas, dispel myths & examine legacy of unfinished revolution. Individuals interested in making videotaped memoirs of their experiences, thoughts & observations of movement can contact WMM for list of questions to guide video sessions. Those w/o access to videotaping equipment may contact WMM for info about equipment access in their region. Archival materials, incl. home movies, still photos, posters & other graphics, slides of artwork & tapes of women's music also being sought. To submit material, or for additional info regarding series, contact: Terry Lawler, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, ste. 500, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606; 2052 (fax).

SHORT FILMS WANTED for *Twilight Zone*-type anthology series. Looking for short (4 to 5 min.) films in color covering suspense, thrillers, fantasy/science fiction & light horror. Prefer strong narrative films w/ plot twists & surprise endings. For more info, call (310) 396-3115.

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL is seeking new works on film/video for 1994-95 distribution season. Third World actively promotes works by & about third world communities in US & internationally. Particularly interested in works by/about Asian/Pacific Islanders in US & diaspora, labor & worker's issues, health related issues (AIDS, women's healthcare.) Interested film- & videomakers should send preview copies of work on 1/2" VHS format (NTSC) & self-addressed, stamped mailer to: Veena Caberos-Sud, distribution director, Third World Newsreel, 335 W. 38th St. NY, NY 10018.

TV 2000, TV pilot, seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

TV POLONIA is looking for entertainment, family, sports, drama & reality programming to fill a cable TV channel sent to Poland in English w/ Polish translations. For more info, send SASE to Stefani Kelly, Southfield Park Tower 1 #700 12835 E. Arapahoe Rd., Englewood CO 80112.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, or call (215) 895-2927.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1-1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, manager of broadcast projects & acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies,

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462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

Opportunities • Gigs

IND. PRODUCERS interested in working for NYC agencies in freelance media prod. are invited to participate in new database directory to be distributed through Crosswalks Television & other sources. Will link inds. w/ government agencies creating media. $10 registration fee gets listing w/ 1 update per yr. For more info & appl., write: SCS Productions, 244 W. 54 St. #800, NY, NY 10019.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL has published 32-pg. resource guide designed to help teachers use 7 African feature films recently released by California Newsreel in wide variety of college courses. Containing brief introductory essays on each film, teaching selections & select bibliographies, the expanded catalog enables colleges & public libraries to build in-depth video collections of African cinema. For free copy, contact: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

CHICAGO FILMLETTER, 3-year-old magazine for those into film/TV prod., is now under new owner/publisher. Every month FilmLetter covers both ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes, & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info, contact: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL; (312) 235-3456.

FREE CATALOG of ind. & experimental films on video! Call Alternative Filmworks, Inc. (800) 797-FILM.

GUIDELINES TO INTERNATIONAL PROD.: Info on shooting overseas. Topics cover everything from pre- to postprod. Incl. chapters on int'l standards & formats, insurance, using foreign crew, int'l contacts & tips on how to keep out of jail. Written by David Calderwood, experienced int'l producer, respected conference presenter & widely published author. Send $15 to: Euro-Pacific Productions, 703 Broad Street, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702. (908) 530-4451.

JACK MACKEREL VIDEO MAGAZINE, quarterly video compilation on VHS videocassete, is accepting submissions of short films, music videos, docs, interviews w/ artists, erotica, computer-generated imagery & animation & video/film whatnot. Send contributions (VHS format) to *Jack Mackerel Video Magazine*, PO Box 80024, Minneapolis, MN, 55408-8024; attn: Greg Bachar. (Send $5 cash for a sample volume.)

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for $14.95 + shipping & handling. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., area M, NY, NY 10019.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artist's right as well as federal & state law. To request copy, call People for the American Way; (202)467-4999.

SHAKING THE MONEY TREE, by consultant Morrie Warshawski, is an insider's look at obtaining financial support for film, TV, & video projects. Chapters incl.: Preparing Your Project for Funding; Doing the Right Research Right; Meeting with Funders, & Writing the Perfect Grant Proposal. Also contains list of resources. To order by VISA/MC:1-800-379-8808; by mail: Send $26.95 (post paid) check or M.O. (CA residents add $8.25%) to: Michael Wiese Productions, 4354 Laurel Canyon Blvd, ste. 234, Studio City, CA 91604.

WHO FUNDS PTV? CPB pamphlet containing listings of public-TV series, entities, & organizations that provide funding to ind. producers. To obtain copy of third edition, send SASE to: *Who Funds PTV?*, CPB Publications Office, 901 E St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004-2037.

Resources • Funds

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris at (612) 341-0755.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., PO Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for $500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER (ETC), is accepting appls for 5-day residency program in study of video image processing techniques. Open to US artists in all genres w/ prior experience in video. Deadline: July 15. Send 3/4" or VHS copy of recent work w/ SASE & choice of 5-day period from Sept. to Jan. 1995 to: ETC, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS Film Bureau offers financial assistance specifically for film speaker's fees to nonprofit community orgs. in NY state. Priority given to groups showing works by ind. filmmakers, programs which are making aatempt to pay artists fees commensurate w/ their worth & emerging community groups that are not ready for first appls. to NYSCA's Electronic Media & Film Program for support. Bureau funds only film presentations. Requests must originate from sponsoring org. Maximum subsidy per org, is $1,000/yr. Max. subsidy for orgs. receiving NYSCA exhibition funds is $600/yr. Bureau offers speakers fees on sliding scale (up to $250 for local artists; $300 for artists traveling to sites that require overnight stay.) Deadlines: Aug. 15, Oct. 15. In letter, incl. list of films, film speakers to be hired w/ fees; other sources of funding; plans for advertising; amount requested & anticipated audience figures. Send to: Duana Butler, FVA, 817 Broadway, NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info conctact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 Fifth Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free of charge to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications ($35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, executive director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

NAATA MEDIA GRANTS PROGRAM for Asian American film & video productions for public TV. This yr's Open Solicitation open to projects in script development, pre-prod., prod. & postprod. phases that deal w/ issues pertaining to Asian Americans. Wide range of genres eligible. Projects in research & development phase or commercial or promotion projects ineligible. Grants range btwn $10,000 - $50,000. Deadline: July 15. Contact: NAATA Media Grants, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES Projects in Media grants support planning, writing, or prod. of TV & radio programs in humanities intended for general audiences. Collaboration of scholars in humanities w/ experienced producers, writer & directors is required. Endowment has special funding opportunity for doc film series. Eligible applicants are nonprofit institutions & organizations, incl. public TV & radio stations. Deadline: Sept. 14. Call (202) 606-8278.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON ARTS' Electronic Media & Film Program announces availability of funds for distribution of recently completed work by ind. media artists residing in NY State. Audio, film video or installations incorporating these media are eligible for grants up to $3,000 toward duplication, marketing & related costs of distribution. This funding category was established to help professional artists gain greater exposure to their work. Funds will be administered by Women Make Movies, NYC-based distributor. Appls will otherwise be reviewed by Council on Arts in manner consistent w/ other appls. Works-in-progress ineligible. Appls. avail. July 6. For appl. & guidelines, contact: Electronic Media & Film Program, NY State Council on Arts, 915 Broadway, NY, NY 10010; (212) 387-7055 or (800) GET-ARTS.

PHELAN ART AWARDS IN FILMMAKING offers 3 prizes of $2,500 to CA-born filmmakers. (Applicants may no longer be CA residents.) Winners announced in Oct. & honored at reception & screening. Deadline: Sept. 2. For guidelines & entry form, send SASE to: Film Arts Foundation, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed- media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA is accepting grant appls for thesis film projects by students enrolled in accredited film programs. For more info, write: Pamela Signorella, director of administration, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021; (212) 744-3221.

UTAH ARTS COUNCIL offers grants to encourage artistic development, to support the realization of specific artistic ideas & to recognize significant contributions artists make to creative enviornment of our state. Deadline: Oct. 3. Artists grant supports activities directly related to artist' work &/or career that are availible during limited time. Contact: Tey Haines, Utah Arts Council, 617 East S. Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84102-1177; (801) 533-5895.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP, nonprofit organization dedicated to discovery & development of new screenwriters, is accepting submissions for WW Special Event, monthly reading by WW Actors Repertory Company before a live audience, w/ prominent film/TV professionals serving as moderators to critique screenplay. Past moderators incl. Oliver Stone, Lawrence Kasdan & Ray Bradbury. For more info, send SASE to: Writers Workshop P.O. Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

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Memoranda: continued from p. 56

Jonathan Robinson, Luis Valdovino, and Kyle Bergeson all received grants in the category of Experimental Film.

Arthur Dong's award-winning film *Coming Out Under Fire*, about gay men and lesbians in the military during WWII, was recently picked up for distribution by Zeitgeist Films.

Steppin', produced and directed by Jerald B. Harkness, recently won the Golden Apple Award from the **1994 National Education And Film Festival**. This award makes *Steppin'* eligible to qualify for an Acadamy Award in the Documentary category.

Independent Dallas filmmakers Allen Mondell and Cynthia Salzman Mondell have received recognition for two films important to and about women: *Guts, Gumption and Go-Ahead: Annie Mae Hunt Remembers*, and *Dreams of Equality*.

AIVF member Abraham Ravett recently recieved a **Guggenheim Fellowship** in filmmaking.

Roger M. Sherman and his wife Dorothy Kalins have recently signed on with **American Playhouse** for a production of Kalins' story *The Baby Hunt*, about the difficulties of adopting a child today.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Nearly 100 members attended AIVF's annual meeting April 22 at Anthology Film Archives in New York. An open screening program preceded the meeting, which was conducted by Debra Zimmerman, chairwoman of the AIVF board of directors. Members received executive director Ruby Lerner's report of the organization's activities and accomplishments over the past year, and our plans for the future.

Special thanks to Loni Ding, Glenn Francis Frontera, Jan Gardner, Holly Angell Hardman, and Peter Lewnes for their help with the event.

MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York on April 24, 1994. In attendance were: Debra Zimmerman (chair), Loni Ding (vice president), James Klein (treasurer), Bart Weiss (secretary), Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Robb Moss, Barbara Hammer, Beni Matias, Joan Braderman, Dee Davis, and Ruby Lerner (ex officio). Absent were Robert Richter, James Schamus, and Norman Wang.

Director of programs and services Pamela Calvert reported that the new program of monthly salons has drawn a strong response, with events taking place or in the planning stages in New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Washington, Minneapolis, and Chicago. In other programs targeted at non-NYC membership, AIVF's current joint membership partners have been surveyed so that we can work out current bugs in the program before we expand it to include additional organizations. We are continuing to investigate online services, and have contacted CompuMentor, which matches computer professionals with nonprofits, to assist us with designing systems for online service provision. In addition to our bulletin board dialogue on America Online, we are also now present on the WELL.

Advocacy coordinator Martha Wallner reported on current telecommunications legislation pending in Congress, which includes a proposed provision to require a minimum 20 percent set-aside in bandwidth for free access by nonprofits. Groups including People for the American Way and Libraries for the Future are working on the establishment of a Telecommunications Networking Fund to replace the funding previously provided by cable franchise fees. Wallner visited NY Rep. Jerrold Nadler in person and Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan's office and reported that Nadler may support a tax for this purpose. We are mobilizing our members from New York, Massachusetts, California, Hawaii, Kentucky, and Texas to contact key senators on the Commerce Committee.

Lerner reported on recent meetings of the Media Arts and Community Media Consortium in Washington, DC, and Chicago. Lerner spoke to the need for sophisticated mapping to identify where the constituency is and to mobilize them in legislative activism. The Consortium will be invaluable in having both this data and the means of dissemination through radio, television, media, and online technologies.

The board voted on an amendment to the FIVF bylaws required in order to process the 2nd Class Bulk Mail Permit, as follows: Resolved: That a copy of each issue of *The Independent Film & Video Monthly* shall be sent to each member of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and that of each member's dues ($45/individual, $25/student, $75/library, $100/nonprofit organization, and $150/business and industry), 25 percent ($11.25, $6.25, $18.75, $25, and $37.50, respectively) shall be for a year's subscription to the publication.

The board approved recommendations of the structure task force relating to board nomination and election procedures, as follows: (a) The executive committee of the board will comprise an election committee, responsible for overseeing the proper conduct of the elec-

tion process. Any members of the executive committee who are running for the board in that year will recuse themselves from the election committee. (b) Members may nominate themselves for the board; nominations need not be seconded. Nominations must be accepted in writing by the nominee. (c) Staff will appoint volunteer members to count the ballots and certify the results; none of the volunteers may be candidates for the board. Volunteers must certify in writing that they have no conflicts of interest which would affect their abilities to serve in this capacity. (d) Nominees will appear on the ballot alphabetically. Nominees will have a maximum of 25 words in which to describe themselves and 150 words for a statement. If the submitted material runs over these limits, the number of words in excess of the limit will be cut from the end and the word "abridged" will appear at the conclusion. (e) Ballots will be collected at the AIVF office, and the ballot count will take place on a single day. Candidates may observe the count or send a representative to observe the count, upon prior notification to the AIVF staff. (f) Candidates may serve complaints to a committee comprising the election committee and the executive director. Appeals to their decision may be made to a Grievance Committee comprising two board members, the executive director, and two AIVF members. (g) All candidates will be notified in writing of the election results; results will also be published in *The Independent*.

The board clarified the policy that any board member with an organizational memberships who leaves that organization must join AIVF as an individual member in order to maintain their board position.

The board considered the question of whether to submit a proposal to the membership to change the bylaws providing for weighted voting. It was agreed that no change be presented to the membership for this year's election; in the coming year, AIVF will collect information about the weighted voting to evaluate the need for a proposed change, including examining the 1994 election results to determine if weighted voting skewed the results.

In lieu of a full board meeting, the executive committee of the board will next meet July 10, 1994.

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David Shepherd, director

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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By Pamela Calvert

Upcoming Events

We'll be spending the summer planning a more active program than ever for the fall—see next month's magazine for details. In the meantime, join us for our 20th Anniversary Celebration and monthly salons!

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For more information, turn to p. 2.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss your work, meet other independents, share war stories, and generally socialize.

New York City:

When: 3rd Tuesday of the month; July 19, 6-8 pm.

Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 2nd Avenue (9th St.)

Los Angeles:

When: 1st Tuesday of the month, July 5, 6-8 pm

Where: The Abbey, 692 North Robertson Boulevard, West Hollywood

NEW! Chicago:

When: Tuesday, July 12, 7:30-10:30 pm

Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 West Division St.

SALONS GO NATIONAL!

Members are organizing AIVF salons in Boston, Minneapolis, and Washington, DC! For specific information on where and when, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert, (212) 473-3400.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices to learn about the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the reosurce library. RSVP appreciated.

When: Thursday, July 21, 5:30 p.m.
Where: AIVF offices

WANTED

One of the things we are asked most frequently by members using our resource library is if we have copies of sample grant applications. We don't, and we're asking filmmakers who have been around this block once, twice, a hundred times to remember how intimidating the whole process seemed at the beginning (and may still now), and send us copies of successful applications that we can keep on file to help folks just starting out. Of particular use would be NEA, NYSCA, and NEH applications, although private foundations such as McArthur, Jerome, and Robeson would also be of great help.

Obviously, we recognize that some of this material may be proprietary, such as budgets. You can black out whatever info you don't want other filmmakers to read, or only send project descriptions, bios, and other supplementary materials. But earn some good karma, help your fellow members out. Send materials to Pam Calvert at the AIVF office.

MEMBERABILIA

AIVF member Mark Gaspar was recently awarded "Best Dramatic Feature" at the **Upland Main Street Film Festival** for his film *An Empty Bed*, about a day in the life of an aging gay man.

AIVF members netted a number of the 13 grants from the **American Film Institutute's Independent Film and Video Program**. Animator Rose Bond received $20, 000 for her work in animation, Tony Buba was awarded $20,000 for his documentary *Struggles in Steel*. Hamilton Sterling received $20,000 in the Narrative category for *Faith of Our Fathers*, and

Continued on p. 54

AIVF

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FIVF PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

Program support for all FIVF programs and services, including follow-through on workshops, salons, meetings, and special events; maintenance of printed membership materials; election management; festival bureau support; volunteer liaison. Must have MAC experience, initiative and good organizational and interpersonal skills.10 hrs./week, $10/hr. Available immediately. Affirmative action employer.

Send resumé, letter and references to Pamela Calvert, Director of Programs and Services, AIVF, 625 Broadway, NYC 10012.

FILM & VIDEO INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

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Pacific Overtures

To the editor:

Thanks for your cover story on Asian American media ["Breaking Through: Asian American Media Hits its Stride," April 1994]. I agree that 1993 was a "breakthrough" year for Asian/Pacific artists and subject matter in the cinema. The success of movies like *The Joy Luck Club*, *The Wedding Banquet*, and *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*, coupled with the continuing strides by independent Asian American filmmakers, has been a long time in coming. However, another 1993 film—*Rising Sun*—reminded me just how much farther Asian American media representation needs to go.

While the films mentioned in your article work against simplistic stereotypes of Asian and Asian American life, *Rising Sun* reinforces these stereotypes in a paranoid mystery-thriller that insinuates Asian culture is inherently incompatible with white American culture and bent on its destruction.

The Joy Luck Club and *Dragon* each received budgets of approximately $11 million. These figures pale in comparison to *Rising Sun*'s $40-million price tag. Furthermore, the two modestly budgeted films were given "special handling" by their Hollywood distributors. *Rising Sun*, on the other hand, was 20th Century Fox's major summer release. While not as profitable as Fox had hoped, the thriller went on to gross in excess of $64 million, overshadowing the more humble $30 million or so grossed by *The Joy Luck Club* and trouncing Oliver Stone's disastrous *Heaven and Earth*.

Even more disturbing was Fox's cavalier treatment of the Asian Americans who questioned the wisdom of bringing Michael Crichton's polemical, inaccurate, anti-Japanese novel to the screen. While it's hard to imagine a Hollywood studio actively antagonizing its African American audiences, Fox simply dismissed the Asian American community as a "special-interest group" and hired Asian public relations people to provide damage control as the community voiced its apprehensions during the film's production.

So, I'm wondering what lesson Hollywood will draw from the box-office performance of last year's Asian-oriented films. Will it continue to see well-rounded stories of Asian Americans as requiring small budgets and special handling, while still pouring huge sums into major releases that cater to the anti-Asian fears of white viewers? Will new talents like Jason Scott Lee and Ming-Na Wen be fostered by Hollywood, or will they vanish into relative obscurity, as John Lone did after the success of *The Last Emperor*? I hope for the best, but Hollywood traditionally interprets the success or failure of its Asian-themed films in ways that seldom benefit Asian American talent—on either side of the camera.

Robert Payne
Studio City, California

To the editor:

While many Asian American media artists are indeed "Moving from the Margins to the Mainstream," most have not yet arrived. Bérènice Reynaud's article offers many important insights on the state of Asian American media, yet I was troubled by several aspects of her analysis.

While I was intrigued by Reynaud's emphasis on contemporary film production in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, it is unclear whether she cites these examples to provide a context for the reception of Asian American media production or whether she is arguing that these various national and multi-national productions are themselves examples of Asian American filmmaking. Much Asian American media is related to Asian media in complex ways, ranging from cinematic influence to funding from overseas investors to Asian philosophies of business and/or aesthetics. However, since many Asian Americans are especially wary of being linked to Asia inaccurately, connections between Asian American media and Asian cinema should be analyzed carefully. While I do not feel that Reynaud is xenophobic, her lack of precision risks slipping into a xenophobic mindset—a mindset which incarcerated 110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry during WWII.

One result of this lack of precision is the reference to Chinese-language cinemas to the exclusion of other Asian cinemas (such as Japan and India, to pick just two nations with thriving film production and export). I think there is a provocative argument to be made about the relative importance of Chinese-language films to Asian American media—but this article assumes such a relationship instead of analyzing it.

Reynaud's article is at its strongest when discussing the diversity of Asian American media production: she rightly points out that not all Asian American makers are concerned with Asian American issues. To discuss Asian American media, then, is to be reminded constantly that some Asian American makers collaborate, comment on each other's work, or in other ways promote a notion of a "Movement" of Asian American artists with common concerns, while others may be more concerned about the margins of sexuality, gender, class, etc., than about Asian American marginality per se.

For all its marginality, Asian American media might represent a "center" of its own— as reflected by the inclusion of Helen Lee, Richard Fung, and other makers based in Toronto. Such makers often produce their films on both sides of the border, and some (but certainly not all) may see themselves as Asian Americans first and Canadians second. Rather than accept these films as being hybridized yet again, we should examine the relationship between Canadian and U.S. subcultures.

If Asian American media is at a crossroads, as

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26 Hollywood Narrative, Difference, and Introductory Filmmaking

When students enroll in film school with visions of Hollywood dancing in their heads, how does a teacher of introductory film production effectively communicate the value of independent production and diverse voices?

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

Nine Film Schools Not to Be Overlooked

Everyone's heard of the film programs at NYU, USC, and UCLA. But many more excellent programs are out there, as Patricia R. Zimmermann reveals.

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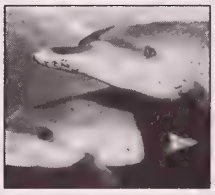




COVER: Film schools are not only a site of professional training, they are bastions of film culture — and, in many cases, independent film production. In this issue, Patricia Zimmermann offers a selected survey of some of most interesting film programs across the country. In a separate essay, she offers insights into the teaching of introductory film production and the pressures brought to bear on this course. Also in this issue, Michael Fox reports on the National Educational Media Market, where many independent productions begin their path into the school and university market. Cover photo: Jason Longo.

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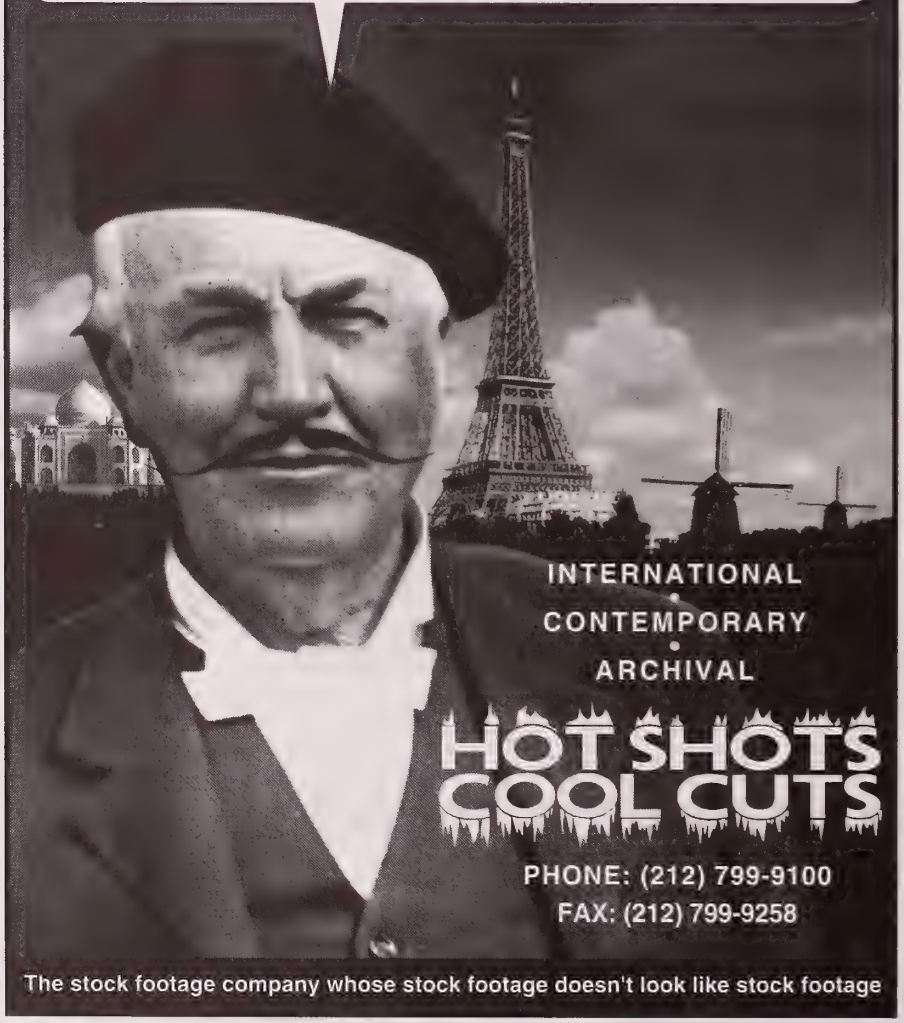
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I think it is, then critics and makers alike must take care not to insist upon the legitimacy of certain paths over others. Just as many Asian Americans are seeking ways to be both Asian American as well as "just plain people," so we must preserve a space in which Asian American media can be understood in racial, ethnic, and other contexts.

Peter Feng
Iowa City, IA

Bérènice Reynaud responds:

While it appears sympathetic to Asian American media, Robert Payne's letter once again uses Hollywood as a gauge of the discourse on race identity, with the implication that "Hollywood is too powerful and nothing will change."

The Japanese American community was effective in spreading information about the damaging stereotypes *Rising Sun* carries, to the extent that most of the people I know in the independent community have refused to see it—Fox's marketing strategy notwithstanding. My article was not designed to lament "how bad things are" (a potentially reactionary stance), but to reflect on some factors of change.

To say that Hollywood misrepresents ethnic and sexual minorities (and, I will add, women in general) is stating the obvious: this has been clear since D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* (1915) and Cecil B. de Mille's *The Cheat* (1915). In spite of their racist content, these films were tremendous box-office successes in their time. This did not prevent African American filmmaker Oscar Micheaux (1884-1951) and Japanese American star Sessue Hayakawa (1890-1973) from having their own production companies, making films that provided American audiences with alternative views of their respective communities. Granted, Micheaux's productions were "race films" primarily directed towards black audiences (during a time when theaters were segregated). However, as Micheaux was dealing with exhibitors himself, he usually managed to convince them to have a show "for all-white audiences interested in black kitsch." Hayakawa became a matinée idol in spite of (and maybe because of) the scandal caused by *The Cheat*, in which he portrayed an evil Asian man.

What would have happened if, when Spike Lee released *She's Gotta Have It*, we had raised our hands and sai, "Oh, this is such a small movie, it will never change anybody in Hollywood!" Well, *She's Gotta Have It*, made for less than the catering budget of *Rising Sun*, did change the general discourse of race representation—*especially in Hollywood*, where producers now can't wait to put their hands on a "black story." Decades of work by the NAACP and other African American advocates have forced Hollywood to offer more responsible, less damaging representations of black characters and the African American community. A similar struggle is being waged by the various

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Asian American media groups listed in the article. And independent cinema, providing audiences with alternative representations, plays an important role in this struggle. For example, after just two decades of feminist film practice and criticism, and while Hollywood continues to crank out countless examples of misogyny (from *Fatal Attraction* to *Basic Instinct* and the unavoidable Mrs. *Doubtfire*), Jane Campion's *The Piano* shared the Palme d'Or at Cannes with Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*. The issue is *not* "Hollywood versus the independents" but the ongoing dialectic between the two. When dealing with race, gender, and representation, binary opposition can only be used to reinforce stereotypes.

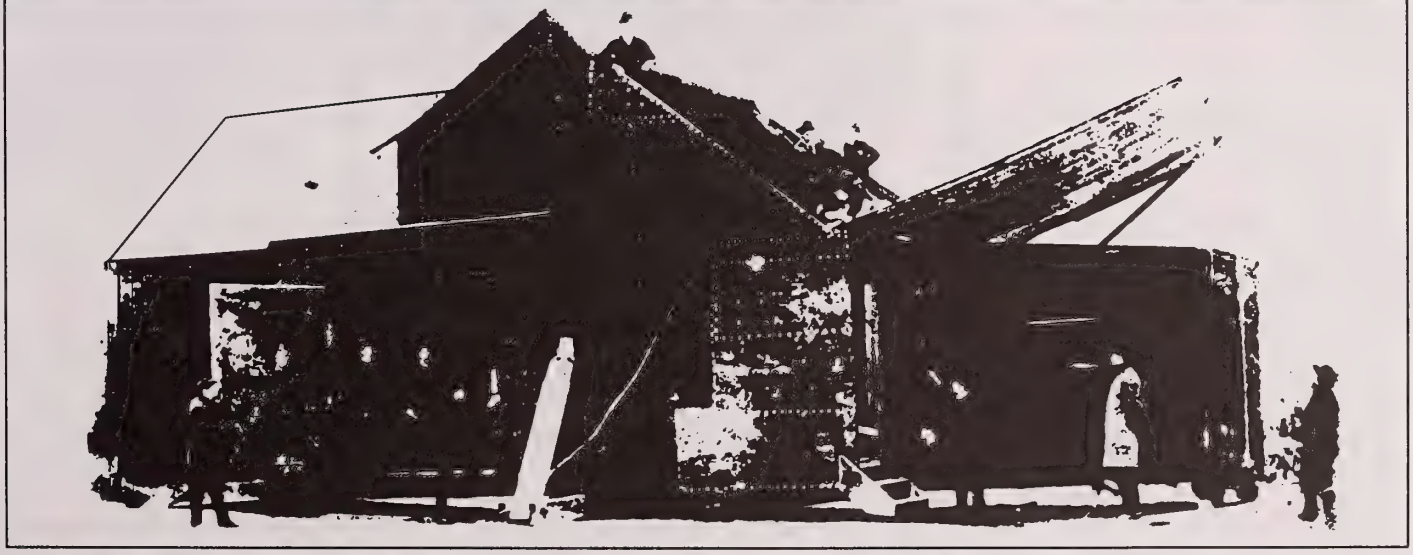
Peter Feng's letter emphasizes a recurring fact: comments on articles written on Asian Americans tend more to focus more on *what is missing* than what is there. The mainstream press is still largely ignoring Asian American media, and, in the independent press, its discussion is often left to Asian American advocates or media activists. As a result, an article written on the subject is usually subjected to what Isaac Julian and Kobena Mercer call "the burden of representation": the article is expected to represent the plight of an entire community.

This is, of course, impossible. In a single article, only so much can be said and the best one can hope is to throw some directions for further inquiry and analysis. There are a lot of things I didn't discuss—for example, the role of Canadian filmmakers of East Indian origin, such as Srinivas Krishna and Deepa Mehta, who have each produced a feature-length film distributed in art houses throughout North America. Indeed, the "complex ways" in which Asian American and Asian media are related could not be analyzed in an article—for this you need a book (with a chapter for each country), and maybe it's time to write it.

Another thing that was not discussed is the definition of *what* is and *who* is Asian American. For programming and funding purposes, the "field" includes media artists whose families have lived in the United States for generations (such as Gregg Araki, John Moritsugu, Renee Tajima) as well as those born in an Asian country who now live and work in the U.S. (for example, Shu Lea Cheang, Ang Lee, Wayne Wang). In the latter case, these makers may or may not continue to produce works in their native countries (Cheang made *How Was History Wounded* in collaboration with Taiwanese media activists in Taipei, Ang Lee's new film, *Eat Drink Man Woman*, shot entirely in Taipei, represented Taiwan at the latest Cannes film festival, and Wang's *Life Is Cheap, but Toilet Paper Is Expensive* was a Hong Kong production.) As a result, the line separating "Asian" from "Asian American" media is blurred.

Moreover, the article was taking the point of view of *media activism* rather than of an essentialist discussion. Very early on, organizations such as Visual Communications, Asian CineVision, and NAATA included Asian as well as Asian American media in their programs and publications. The first two entries of ACV's *Asian American Media Reference Guide* list Steven Okazaki's *A-M-E-R-I-C-A-N-S* (a classic Asian American documentary) and Kon Ichikawa's *An Actor's Revenge* (a classic Japanese feature) and the guide consistently mixes the two categories as *an ensemble of resources available to programmers and educators* who want to change the stereotypical images of Asian people perpetrated by the mainstream.

One concept that is missing in my article as well as in Feng's letter is that of *diaspora*, which has become so fruitful in the discussion of African America media, as proven by the recent "Celebration of Panafrican Cinema" conference, which allowed filmmakers, scholars, critics, and media activists from Africa, the Caribbean, England, and the U.S. to talk to each other. There was a rift, however, between African Americans and Africans, because this relationship is "complex" and is being worked out, right now, in the field. The existence of a diasporic sensibility implies that we are living in a world of shifting identities, a world in which Caucasians have to realize that not everybody living in the U.S. is white. But also U.S. citizens and residents have to accept a certain "destabilization" and decentering of American culture.



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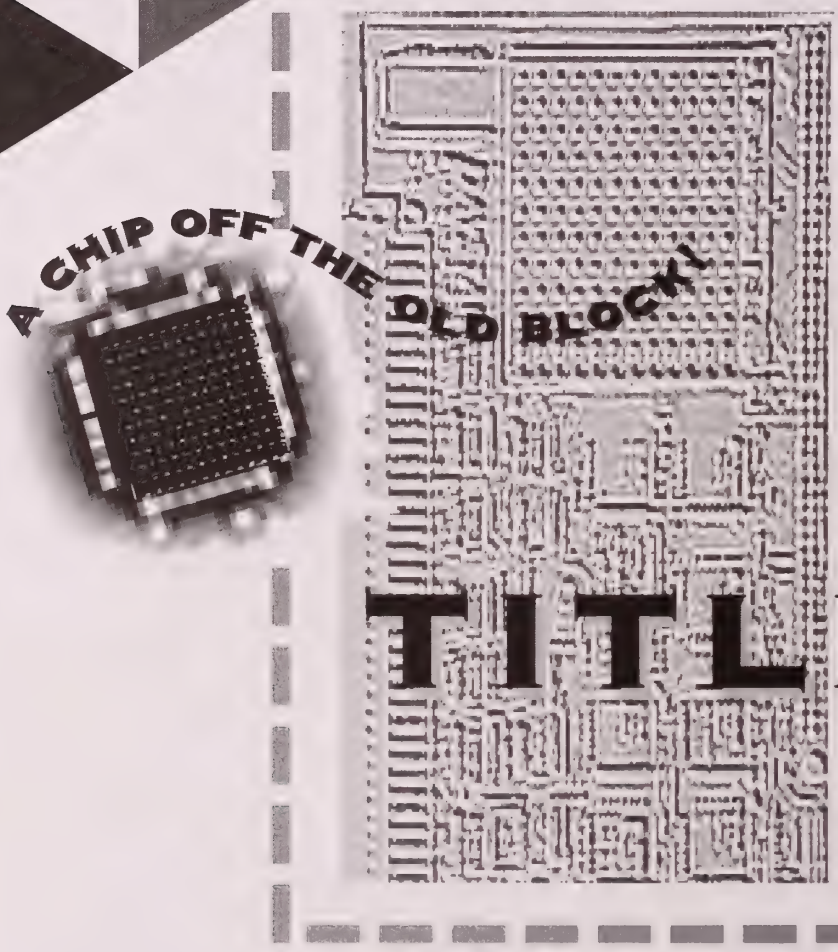
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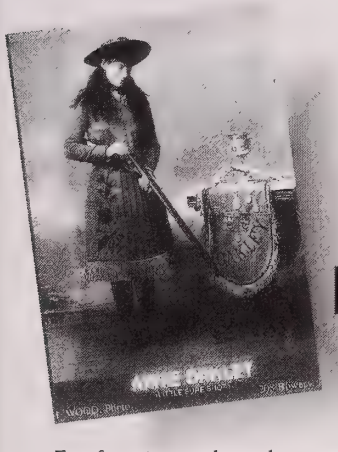
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IN WITH A BANG



Annie Oakley is once again causing a stir in the West—this time in Hollywood
Postcard art courtesy Sam Katz



FIRST-TIME PRODUCER TAKES ON HOLLYWOOD BIG GUNS

For first-time independent producers, the West doesn't get much wilder than Hollywood. Sam Katz, a freelance writer and editor who served as director for the now-defunct Nissan Focus student film awards, spent three years and $20,000 shopping Marcy Heidish's 1983 novelized biography *The Secret Annie Oakley* around to production companies and major studios during the late eighties. Along the way, Katz discovered that large talent agencies can use their packaging power to jump-start projects while abandoning the producers who cultivate them. Hers is a cautionary tale for independents attempting to deal with the Big Guns in Hollywood.

Heidish's fictionalized account, now out of print, debunks the Ethel Mermanization of the nineteenth century legend by claiming Oakley was abused as a child. A history buff, Katz took a three-year option on the book in 1988, hoping to make her debut as an independent film producer. She even purchased all remaining copies from its publisher, the New American Library.

Among the 70 or so places to which she pitched the project was Dreyfuss/James—the company actor Richard Dreyfuss runs with Judy James, who at the time was a member of the Focus Awards' board. "I thought Dreyfuss would have made a perfect Buffalo Bill Cody," says Katz. "I really let them run with it, but I was appalled with the [slow] way in which they deal. It took them nine months to get two passes." In time, Katz initiated talks with Jonathan Kaplan—after he had directed *The Accused* but years before he took on *Bad Girls*.

In the fall of 1991, Katz made motions to renew her option on Heidish's book. But as Katz recalls, Heidish and ICM, the agency to which the author had since moved, refused to negotiate and did not return her calls. As soon as the option ran out, ICM made a deal with Dreyfuss/James and Turner Entertainment to adapt *Oakley* for the small screen; production company Kushner-Locke agreed to put up development funds. Nobody notified Katz. "In my opinion, I had exercised my option right. In their opinion, they didn't want to deal with me," she says.

In August 1993, Katz filed a half-million dollar lawsuit in New York State Supreme Court, naming Dreyfuss, James, ICM, and Heidish as codefendants. She finally settled out of court this spring, but opts not to discuss the terms of the settlement, which she calls "ridiculous, particularly considering the defendant involved: Mr. Left Wing himself, Richard Dreyfuss.... It didn't get past me they were stepping on my First Amendment rights."

Ironically, Dreyfuss may not find a home for *Oakley* either. Citing a change of heart, Turner dropped the project last fall. "We do have the option and we are going to do the movie," Judy James stated during a brief phone interview. "But I have nothing to say about it." Heidish has since left ICM.

Now, with the market overrun by *Bad Girls* and *Young Guns*, Katz is doubtful that her six-year-old dream to make a feature about the legendary sharpshooter will ever come to fruition. But she has learned a painful lesson: "When authors are removed from the Hollywood system, they are easily swayed by big stars and don't understand the labor that goes into pitching a piece.... As an independent, you need really good legal counsel with options. My contract would have been more iron-clad."

ROBERT KOLKER

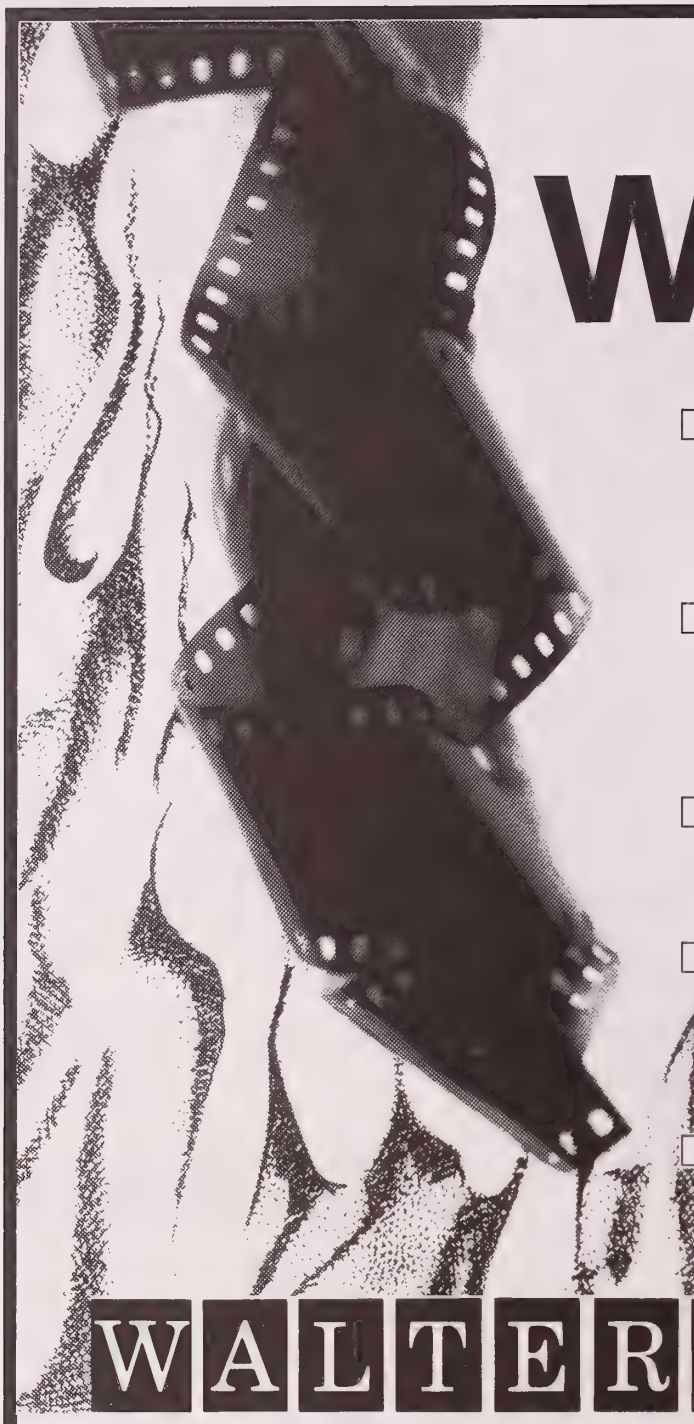
Robert Kolker is a reporter for The Westsider *in Manhattan.*

BRAVO LAUNCHES INDEPENDENT FILM CHANNEL

On September 1, the Bravo Cable Network will launch the Independent Film Channel (IFC), a 24-hour cable channel devoted to independent film. IFC will present features, documentaries, shorts, animation, and works by emerging filmmakers, as well as original programs offering a behind the scenes look at independent filmmaking. All work will be shown unedited and without commercial interruptions.



According to Jonathan Sehring, vice president of production and programming at Bravo, the need for a separate independent film channel became apparent five years ago when Bravo switched from a pay service to a basic cable service in many cities, extending its reach into the Bible



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Belt. Two days before Jean Luc Godard's *Hail Mary* was scheduled to be broadcast, the company underwent a vicious attack from the radical right, which included hostile picketers, several bomb threats, and anonymous callers asking for home addresses.

"We decided to pull the picture for safety reasons," says Sehring, "and for three or four weeks afterwards there were still hate calls coming in. We were getting calls from areas of the country where we didn't even have distribution." Since then, Bravo has edited controversial films and in some cases withheld them.

Over the years, Bravo has accumulated a stock pile of programming, including 150 films, with broadcast rights for a second channel. "Everyone here is very excited about finally being able to show unedited films," says Sehring. "It's kind of a relief actually. It's been tough to not to be able to show so many of the films we like. We will also have the ability to program many more foreign-language films. And the response from cable operators has been tremendous."

Whether the Independent Film Channel will be a pay or basic service will be decided by the local cable operator. But working in IFC's favor are the current changes in the cable industry, which are likely to result in a greater flexibility in the way cable services are offered to the consumer. Instead of having only basic cable and pay services to choose from, there will be other options such as "a la carte," enabling the consumer to pick individual channels from among the basic services, or the "tier" system, in which services are offered in packages of four or five in addition to basic service. These types of options should make IFC less vulnerable to pressure from right-wing religious groups since viewers will have more control over what comes into their living rooms.

Also to IFC's benefit are the rollbacks in cable rates that have forced cable operators to look for other ways to maintain their revenue streams. "Even though operators have a tight channel capacity," says Sehring, "they are looking for channels that can generate new revenue. With the greater awareness created by films like *The Piano* and *The Crying Game*, the Independent Film Channel is a good option for them."

Indeed, the idea of an independent film channel is so timely that Showtime is also working on plans for a 24-hour Showtime Film Festival based on the same concept. They are currently seeking partners in the venture, and no launch date has been set.

Bravo's strong ties to the independent film community, which include longstanding relationships with companies like Sony Classics, Miramax, Goldwyn, and New Line, have been helpful in launching the Independent Film Channel so quickly. "When it became clear that an independent film channel would be part of the 500 channel universe," says Sehring, "we figured we had better do it first, since it's been our area for so long." Martin Scorsese has been an avid supporter of Bravo and is now heading up an advisory board for IFC, which includes Robert Altman, Joel and Ethan Coen, Martha Coolidge, Spike Lee, and Steven Soderbergh.

IFC will program 30 to 35 feature premieres per month as well as presenting films under categories such as The Masters, New Voices, International Film Festival, and Cult Classics. There will be two or three slots per week for collections of short films that will be packaged into hour-long programs. Other categories include People We Like, a month-long retrospective of the work of independent stalwarts such as Seymour Cassell, Bob Hoskins, and Harvey Keitel accompanied by short biographical pieces, and Reel Perspectives, a *P.O.V.*-type documentary series.

At some point in the future, IFC also hopes to be involved in production. "It's in the business plan for down the road," says Sehring. "Hopefully, it will be something like Channel Four in the UK or American Playhouse, doing partial funding. But it's at least two years away."

The idea of a network or two devoted to independent work is appealing to many makers, but the recent announcements by Bravo and Showtime also raise some serious questions: Have the cable nets given serious thought into marketing the channels? Why is Showtime, which has rarely backed independent media in the past, willing to possibly chip away at its own subscriber base by starting the channel? Who will program the services, and is there enough independent work available to sustain two or even one 24-hour channel?

Feature acquisitions for IFC are handled by Caroline Kaplan, director of development, as well as George Lentz, manager of acquisitions and scheduling, who also handles short films. Filmmakers should contact Kaplan or Lentz at Bravo, 150 Crossways Park West, Woodbury, NY 11797; (516) 364-2222.

JENNINE LANOUETTE

Jennine Lanouette is a Manhattan-based freelance writer and story consultant.

NY NONPROFIT SEEKS NEW VENUES FOR SHORTS

New Yorkers who flock to Central Park in droves each summer for cultural events ranging from Joseph Papp's Shakespeare in the Park to classical music concerts may be able to add short film screenings to this year's calendar.

The Asbury-Manhattan Film Festival has gotten the go-ahead from New York City to stage a few days of outdoor screenings at the bandshell in Central Park this September. In addition to show-

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ing short films that have rarely or never been screened publicly, the event's organizer plans to show works that performed well at short film festivals. The Central Park screenings will be underwritten by a corporate sponsor and will either run for two or three days over a one-week period or one day a week over the course of the month. All films screened will be under 25 minutes in length. At press time, specific dates and information on films to be shown were not yet available.

The screenings are but one of several projects



Salute to Cinema is working hard to assure that shor
Howard Finster, Man of Vision get wider vi
Courtesy Asbury Film Festival

the festival has taken on in its quest to rally support for the short film genre. Doug LeClair, head of the annual Asbury-Manhattan Short Film Festival, also is working as a consultant for Salute to Cinema, Inc., a Manhattan-based nonprofit devoted to bringing short films into movie theaters.

Housed in the Tribeca Film Center, Salute to Cinema was formed after the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences considered eliminating both its short film Oscar categories in 1993. "One of my goals in life is to make filmmaking less elite," says Betsy Dealy, who heads the organization. "There are very few independents who make big films that get shown....The average guy has a lot to say."

For more than a year, Dealy has worked to revive the movie house tradition of showing shorts before the feature film. The Cineplex Odeon chain has tentatively committed to screening shorts twice daily prior to feature films in their theaters. Initially, the program, which was still without a corporate sponsor at press time, will involve Cineplex Odeon theaters in five cities around the country: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, and Washington, DC. Dealy has already started soliciting work. She says the films screened before the features will have to be very short, so that the theaters can stick to a tight feature schedule.

LeClair is looking at other avenues for getting

short films shown. Four cable networks interested in screening shorts have approached him about putting together packages. HBO, he says, is considering a monthly series on shorts.

For more information on Salute to Cinema, Inc. or the Asbury-Manhattan Film Festival, contact: Betsy Dealy or John LeClair, 375 Greenwich St., Tribeca Film Center, ste. 724; New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-3968 .

WENDY GREENE

Wendy Greene is a freelance writer living in Manhattan.

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS MAY RELINQUISH ROLE AS FEST ORGANIZER

In the midst of the ninth edition of the Asian Pacific Film and Video Festival (May 17-29)—one of the must successful ever (showing 132 works from 16 different countries)—Visual Communications (VC) executive director Linda Mabalot was informed by the grants office of the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs of cuts affecting her organization, which cosponsors the event. While two years ago VC received $47,000 from DCA, funding was reduced to $32,000 for 1993-1994, and to $7,000 for 1994-1995. This is a severe blow for an organization with a $300,000 budget.

Founded in 1970, VC is the oldest Asian American media organization. Half the organization's budget goes to salaries and overhead (three of VC's six staff members now are doing full-time jobs for part-time salaries; the remainder is used for production, publications, and programming.

How will the organization absorb the cuts? "I'm afraid there won't be another Asian Pacific Film and Video Festival," says Mabalot. Budgeted at $50,000 a year, the festival receives 50 percent of its support from the UCLA Film Archive and 50 percent from VC. "We are very concerned," says festival programmer Abraham Ferrer. "Without the festival, there are a lot of names in Asian American media that nobody would ever have heard about. And when the media hype about Asian cinema fades out, we will be left with what has been the meat and potatoes of this festival: the development and exposure of the Asian Pacific American cinemas."

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) was given large amounts of money a few years ago when city planners thought the arts could help in developing L.A. tourism. The city agency is currently undergoing reorganization. Mabalot explains that, out of a total budget of $2 million, 7.2 percent ($193,000) went to the media arts field. Of this sum, 42 percent went to major organizations, 33 percent to individual artists, and the rest to five small media arts organizations. "It's a question of race and class," Mabalot comments. "Smaller and community-based arts organizations are folding everywhere. What kind of 'art form' should we support? The city has built the LA Philharmonic and is funding organizations that pay union wages, have 10 people on their development staffs, and produce 'elite culture.' How can we compete?"

Janet Kolb, DCA's public relations officer, says the reason quoted by the panel to reduce VC's grant is that the application was "not focused enough." She adds that "the majority of organizations that applied didn't receive full funding" because there was a "slight reduction in funds" and also because DCA received more applications than in years past.

VC has been a vital agent in the development of Asian and Asian American media culture in this country. Cancelling next year's festival would be a catastrophe for the mediascape in Southern California and for Asian Pacific media producers all over the world.

Donations can be mailed to: Visual Communications, 263 South Los Angeles St., Rm. 307, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462; fax: 687-4848. Letters asking for contributions can be sent to commercial distributors who, by showing Asian movies, are currently cashing in on years of activism and media advocacy performed by organizations including VC: Miramax (*Farewell My Concubine*); Goldwyn (*The Wedding Banquet*), Buena Vista (*The Joy Luck Club*), or Orion (*Raise the Red Lantern*).

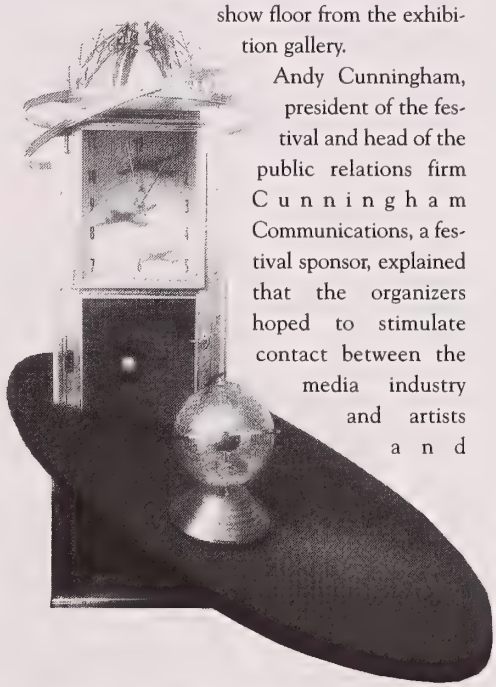
BÉRÈNICE REYNAUD

Bérènice Reynaud writes for Libération, Cahiers du cinéma, *and* Sight and Sound *and teaches film/video criticism at California Institute of the Arts.*

ART MEETS COMMERCE AT FIRST INTERACTIVE MEDIA FESTIVAL

Are computer programmers artists? Can companies make art? Have art and commerce become completely intertwined? Can anybody tell the difference anymore? The first annual Interactive Media Festival and competition, held in Los Angeles in conjunction with the new-tech trade convention Digital World in June, ran headlong into these questions.

According to its organizers, the festival was designed to celebrate the best in interactive media and begin establishing standards for excellence. The 27 works selected were nominated by well-credentialed international jurors, including curators Tim Druckrey and Anne Marie Duguet, cyberspace gadfly and Electronic Frontier Foundation cofounder John Perry Barlow, and artist Stephen Beck. But there were no categories of competition and no distinction between art and product. Thus commercial CD-ROMs like Broderbund Software's children's book *Just Grandma and Me* and Peter Gabriel's music video album *Xplore 1* were exhibited and judged next to a multiuser object-oriented environment called BayMOO, an interactive sculpture by New York artist Ken Feingold, an installation by British artist Paul Sermon, and a Sega game called Virus Fighter. Further obscuring whatever difference still exists between art and commerce, only a floor-to-ceiling curtain divided the manic selling of software and hardware on the trade show floor from the exhibition gallery.



Separated by a mere curtain from the convention hall booths of Digital World were artworks like Ken Feingold's interactive sculpture, *Childhood/Hot & Cold Wars (The Appearance of Nature)*, in the Interactive Media Festival.
Courtesy mediamaker

Andy Cunningham, president of the festival and head of the public relations firm Cunningham Communications, a festival sponsor, explained that the organizers hoped to stimulate contact between the media industry and artists and developers. Indeed hundreds of people strolled from the trade show floor into the gallery. But many of the artists in the festival seemed uncomfortable with the exhibition context and questioned whether putting people in the same building actually facilitated communication.

For Paul Sermon, it was the first time his installation *Telematic Dreaming* had been presented outside a gallery context and people tended to respond to the piece as if it were a gimmick, he said. Festival press reps advised Ken Feingold to "grab" people with purple press ribbons to get attention. But Feingold says, "I'm not comfortable standing by my piece. I feel like a shoe salesman."

Despite these reservations, however, many people—including artists—conceded that the exhibition was enormously interesting and perhaps the only way for this type of high-price and technically complicated work to be shown in the U.S. given

the state of public arts funding. The festival's budget was between $3.5 and $4 million, not a sum liable to be had from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Jeffrey Shaw, an Australian artist now living in Germany, said he thought it was particularly useful for industry executives who don't ordinarily see noncommercial applications of the technologies. He added it's important that industry people be confronted with the scope of activity going on in the field, and that the role of the artist at this juncture is critical. "Artists need to be setting higher standards for the industry. We can hope that it will have a stimulating effect [on the industry]," he said.

And perhaps it will. The festival awards, juried by commercial artists such as choreographer Debbie Allen and musician Herbie Hancock, went to two "art works" (Agnes Hegedus and Paul Sermon) and one "product" (Peter Gabriel). The festival is juried and by invitation only.

BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

Barbara Bliss Osborn reports from Los Angeles on independent film, video, and new technologies.

MEDIA ARTS CENTER REPLACES FILM IN THE CITIES

At first glance, one may not even realize Film in the Cities (FITC) is gone. The Saint Paul, Minnesota-based organization that provided the regional film and photography communities with resources and support for over two decades closed its doors last fall, but inside the building it occupied, former members continue to use production equipment, take classes, and exhibit work.



Minneapolis/St. Paul's new Media Artist Access Center has risen from the ashes of the defunct Film in The Cities. Courtesy FITC

Now local artists are being served by the Midwest Media Artists Access Center (MMAAC). More a spin-off than a sequel, MMAAC was founded by former FITC equipment access manager Steve Westerlund to maintain the availability of low-rent film, video, and photography equipment to local artists. The new organization also provides educational opportunities and occasional film screenings, but according to Westerlund, it will never approach the comprehensive offerings of FITC.

"That could have been one of the main reasons that Film in the Cities isn't here any more," Westerlund explains. "It was trying to do too much. The resources available kept getting smaller, yet it kept wanting to do all the things that it had done before, and even more. It couldn't let go and that probably hastened the demise"

MMAAC was born at a September, 1993, town meeting held to apprise the public about FITC's downfall. As the proceedings quickly turned into a vehicle for local artists to vent anger and frustration over the 23-year-old institution's unexpected closure, Westerlund informed the crowd of a membership drive and a fundraising bake sale he was holding for his new organization.

MMAAC recruited more than 30 people and sold about $200 worth of cookies that evening. By the end of 1993, membership had reached 180, a number that has since topped 200 (approximately double the number of access memberships FITC ever claimed at one time). "When Film in the Cities closed, it caused a stir," says Westerlund. "People were taking organizations like Film in the Cities for granted, figuring they were always going to be there. All of a sudden, after 20 years, they got a wake-up call."

Many members may have been shocked into supporting MMAAC, but Westerlund also credits his organization's strong initial success to low rates. Through the end of last year, MMAAC offered membership for just $25, a far cry from the $75 to $100 payments FITC required for access to equipment. Rental fees, however, are higher now than in the past. MMAAC recently received additional funding in the form of two grants totaling $25,000 from the Jerome Foundation and the McKnight Foundation, both former FITC supporters.

Under an agreement with the FITC Board of Directors, MMAAC will continue to use the defunct organization's equipment in exchange for serving as caretaker of the building FITC still owns. Once that property is sold, MMAAC will have to move, but Westerlund is optimistic his organization will be able to negotiate to retain the equipment.

Although Westerlund emphasizes that equipment access will remain MMAAC's number-one priority, he says offering classes is also important to build the organization's base of users. "Education helps bring in people who don't know how to use the equipment but maybe have some ideas that they want to try out," he adds.

MMAAC recently encouraged further use of its facilities by administering $4,500 worth of access grants for women filmmakers, a program funded in part by the Academy Foundation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Still, Westerlund insists his new organization is not likely to undertake the kinds of extensive education and grant programs once offered by FITC. "We want to be sure that we're not stretching ourselves thin," he says.

SCOTT BRIGGS

Scott Briggs is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer.

COLOGNE'S FEMINALE FEELS HEAT OF EUROPEAN RECESSION

As some wits have noticed, the expression "women and children first" has taken on new meaning in Germany during the current recession. Not just children's film festivals in Frankfurt and Essen, but one of the world's leading feminist cultural projects—the Feminale festival of films by women, which takes place in Cologne—have been affected by recent cuts. The sixth Feminale, originally scheduled for June 1994, was postponed due to a shortfall of roughly $107,000, about half the amount required to stage the five-day event with both foreign and domestic films and directors. Recently, the festival organizers announced the event had been rescheduled for September 29 through October 3. The event will be funded in part by a Berlin-based foundation, in part by a Cologne bank, and in part by a local television station. Although fest organizers say they are still short on funds, they are confident that the program will be shown in its entirety. A last minute scramble for funding paid off this year, but the festival's future still remains in doubt.

The European Union, faced with hundreds of grant proposals from cultural organizations, did not put any money into the Feminale this year, and less is being given by the German government on the federal and state levels. Although the festival organizers sought additional money from the city to make up for these cuts, it was not granted—Cologne's annual contribution remains about $13,400. Nevertheless, the Feminale staff will stage a fall event so as not to lose its place in the

film landscape they have built up over the last 10 years. "It is dangerous to stop," said Marion Kranen, a founder of the festival "because then starting up again becomes a risky business."

The setting for Feminale's woes is a Europe in which government funding for culture has suddenly become tight and will probably decrease even further. Especially in Germany, where unification has proved expensive, high unemployment is causing budget shifts to the social-service sector. And when the squeeze is on, the large cultural institutions have a much better chance of survival. "It's easier to cut small amounts, especially if no one will scream too loudly about them," Kranen observed.

Glamorous, star-studded shows also seem to get funded, even in hard times: politicians and business leaders look for events that will get their city high visibility in the mass media and that promise to bring in lots of tourist money (even if they don't deliver). The Feminale—which includes experimental and short works, often by newcomers—does not have this profile. It enjoys considerable prestige in international film circles and has received impassioned letters of support from many festival directors, the adventurous TV program *Das kleine Fernsehspiel*, and the U.S. distributor Women Make Movies.



Organizers of Cologne's Feminale are shopping for funders in the wake of Germany's recession.
Courtesy Feminale

But in the future, the Feminale will have to continue cultivating contacts outside of film circles if it is to stay alive. This will involve some change in mindset: right now, Kranen believes, "We have a right to the money because we are involved in cultural work for the public and not for ourselves—and we expect neutral and objective decisions" from governmental grant-giving agencies. Since these expectations of impartial treatment have not been met, it seems time to develop new tactics like intensive lobbying and coalition forming. Of course, building such bridges will not be easy. According to Feminale business

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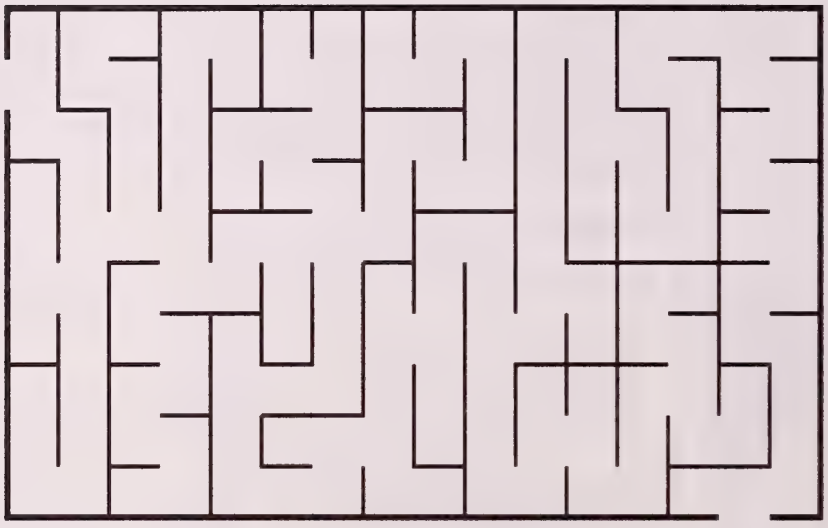


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director Katja Mildenberger, "In Germany, it's not usual for directors of alternative projects to have lunch with politicians. The old boy networks are often very tight and not open to us as feminists." But there may be some improvement now that a woman, Katinka Dittrich von Wehring, heads Cologne's cultural office. "The Feminale knows her as a friend of film from her days at the Goethe Institute in Moscow," Kranen said.

Private sponsorship, a viable option in the U.S., is underdeveloped in Europe, due to its reliance on government funding of culture for so long. The Feminale has approached companies, trying for in-kind contributions; it isn't easy, however, to find businesses willing to spend money on controversial ideas and relatively small audiences.

That is partly because feminism is marginalized and embattled in Germany even more so than in the U.S. among comparable circles of students, artists, and intellectuals. For example, although men can and do attend screenings at the Feminale, it still primarily has a reputation as a festival for, as well as by, women. So the fate of the Feminale seems tied to the acceptance of feminism as well as avant-garde filmmaking. "If you're not wanted, you can go to as many lobbying lunches as you want—it won't help," noted Kranen.

KAREN ROSENBERG

Karen Rosenberg is a contributing editor of The Independent.

IN BRIEF

In July, **Archive Films** became the exclusive worldwide rep for licensing all stock footage from the **Prelinger Collection**. The collection, encompassing over 25,000 films and 20,000 cans of unedited footage, is the largest private archive of advertising, educational, and industrial motion pictures in the U.S. Says Rick Prelinger, president of Prelinger Archives, "The stock footage world just got a little smaller. This deal will make footage research and licensing easier for everyone, and give us the time and space to organize and catalog our collection."

ERRATA

Bérènice Reynaud's article "Asian American Media Hits Its Stride" [April 1994], contained several typographical errors.: Rosalind Chao and King Street Media were misspelled. Also, Frances Nuyen, who was idenfied in the article as Vietnamese, is actually French-born of Vietnamese parents.

In the July 1994 Media News article "American Playhouse Forms Playhouse Pictures," novelist A.S. Byatt was incorrectly identified as A.S. Hyatt.

The Independent regrets these errors.

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WHIT STILLMAN
feature director
BARCELONA

By Michele Shapiro

FOR A FIRST-TIME FILMMAKER, timing may not be everything, but it sure helps. It couldn't hurt the second time around either. Just ask Whit Stillman, a Harvard grad who dabbled in publishing, international film sales, and the cartoon biz before completing his first feature film, *Metropolitan*, in the mid-eighties. Revolving around the Upper East Side debutante set, the film was savored like caviar on toast points by critics and moviegoers ensconced in the decade of me, myself, and *moi*. By 1990, Stillman had earned an Oscar nomination for Best Original Screenplay, an award for Best First Feature from the New York Film Critics' Circle, and an audience that transcended Laura Ashleyites and Ralph Laurentians.


Courtesy filmmaker

Enter the nineties, a far more austere decade in which decadence is passé and abstinence is in. So, coincidentally, are Spanish films. Pedro Almodovar is a household name, and Fernando Trueba's *Belle Epoque* garnered the 1993 Oscar for Best Foreign Film. Now comes Fine Line Features' release of Stillman's second film, *Barcelona*. Stillman began writing the script back in 1983—long before *Metropolitan*—while working as a foreign sales agent for a group of Spanish producers and directors (including Trueba).

"I needed to make *Metropolitan* first because I knew only a story of its narrow scope, filmable close to home, would be suited to my likely budget and total lack of experience," Stillman recalls. His instincts paid off. *Metropolitan*, which cost him about $80,000 out of pocket, was picked up by New Line and became an arthouse hit. This made it possible for Stillman to secure a distribution deal for *Barcelona* with New Line's subsidiary, Fine Line Features, prior to the shoot. It also paved the way for a breakfast meeting with Castle Rock executives, which resulted in an independent maker's dream come true: an offer to maintain complete autonomy while working within the parameters of the independent production company's $3- to $4-million budget.

Stillman does not feel completely at ease discussing the several million-dollar leap from *Metropolitan* to *Barcelona*, which was shot entirely on location in the cosmopolitan city. In fact, he concedes that he "spent more money than he had to spend" on the latter. His fondest recollections are not of the actual shoot but of the day in June 1992 spent filming establishing shots ("Barcelona was at its apex of beauty before the Olympics") and the final weeks when most of the crew had dispersed and Stillman knocked on strangers' doors to find locations *he* felt worked with the story.

Although the backdrop for *Barcelona* is a bit more exotic than *Metropolitan*'s, Stillman's style—his dry-as-Milkbones wit and emphasis on dialogue—are reminiscent of the first work. Two of *Metropolitan*'s lead actors, Taylor Nichols and Christopher Eigeman, again come center lens in *Barcelona*.

Nichols plays Ted Boynton, an uptight, expatriate businessman who vows not to fall in love and promptly does. Eigeman is Ted's cousin Fred, a naval p.r. man, who comes to Barcelona at a time when anti-NATO and anti-American sentiment are at an all-time high. To refer to the film's antihero as "obnoxious," as the film's press book does, is a severe understatement. Tushka Bergen and Mira Sorvino (daughter of actor Paul Sorvino) round out the cast as Ted and Fred's respective Spanish love interests. Coincidentally, neither of the actresses is a native Spaniard.

"Because the script is so dialogue-heavy," Stillman explains, "I was warned by many people to cast actresses for whom English is a first language." Stillman is quick to add that Barcelona residents who have seen the film approved of the casting choices. The verdict is still out, however, as to how American audiences will respond.

In his Westerly Films office on Lower Broadway in Manhattan, Stillman nervously awaits August, when *Barcelona* will open nationally. He has warned his interviewer that the office is a mess, but quite to the contrary, it is immaculate. Papers are piled neatly on the front desk and Stillman, a former reporter for the *Harvard Crimson* and freelance writer, keeps a small pad handy to jot down meticulous notes whenever the phone rings, which it does—often. Stillman, who has just returned from Cannes, where *Barcelona* was screened privately for U.S. press and foreign distributors, is now en route to Seattle, where the film will close this year's film festival.

Dressed in a white oxford shirt and khakis reminiscent of his *Metropolitan* characters, Stillman, 42, isn't quite sure what to make of a recent blurb in *Entertainment Weekly* describing the new film. "Smart...and small" is all it says. "I think that's good," Stillman muses. "But some people involved with the film were upset."

It's no wonder that Stillman would take criticism of the film personally. Barcelona holds special significance for the director, who met his Spanish wife there. "My first trip to Barcelona was to facilitate her return to New York," he recalls. "The second was to marry. Later there were stays for work, the births of our two daughters [aged three and eight], scriptwriting, and family unity. I have never had the experience of being in Barcelona as a traveller or a detached observer."

During the early eighties, Stillman's role as foreign sales agent led to acting roles in the films of Fernando Trueba and Fernando Colomo. It took some time, however, and working on half-inch black-and-white videos for public access before Stillman realized his place was *behind* the camera, not in front of it.

According to the filmmaker, an AIVF membership was crucial to getting his first project off the

ground. He combed *The Independent*'s classifieds for a cinematographer and ultimately came upon John Thomas' name. "He'd read 50 scripts and loved mine," Stillman says. "His interest made it real. We made a tentative budget and hired a production manager." He encourages other first-timers to do the same and not to get discouraged early on. "Lots of failure happens while you're succeeding. You get one distributor and get rejected by others. You're accepted at one festival and rejected by others."

Stillman's next script, *The Last Days of Disco*, about three women and told from a woman's point of view, will be independently produced and again financed by Castle Rock. While liking some things about the way Hollywood does business (e.g., having the trailer for *Barcelona* completed before the film was even edited, leaving several months for promotion), he does not subscribe to the notion that a bigger budget equals a better end product. Although he has been offered jobs directing films for the Hollywood establishment, Stillman says, "I want to stay low-budget. It's more important having a comfortable working environment than more money," he concludes.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

WENDY KIRKUP & PAT NALDI
electronic media infiltrators
S.I.S.

By Laura U. Marks

At the Banff Centre for the Arts, five women cluster around a computer terminal, alternately tense with concentration and rocking with laughter. The British artist team of Wendy Kirkup and Pat Naldi have included me in an on-line conference called "Seduced and Abandoned: The Body in the Virtual World," held in a MUD (Multi-User Dimension) and hosted by media critic Timothy Druckrey. A video camera captures our interaction as we participate in the on-line extension of the conference, which was held last March at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London.

At an event supposedly devoted to democratic communication, we witness mostly sabotage and schmoozing. Ironically, not enough space was reserved for our virtual meeting, so we keep getting booted off. But as there is a group of us at the terminal, we're able to creatively monitor our conflicting reactions of rage, intellectual stimulation, arousal, and hilarity. Our collaboration has brought home the touted social character of the net and made it more intimate and immediate.

As artists, Kirkup and Naldi are all about collaboration and the use of multimedia to establish interpersonal communication within public spaces. As a team, they have worked in computer-mediated communications and with video surveillance systems, stressing how both technologies are used to monitor individuals' actions.

Both women started out painting and doing installations in addition to photographic and time-based work. Their partnership was formed in 1991 with an installation called *0836 785555*, which utilized surveillance cameras, as did their 1993 video, *Search*. Since then, they've operated primarily on the Internet's MUDs and MOOs (Multi-Object Oriented MUDs), which allow for real-time interactions between multiple users.

On-line, Kirkup and Naldi use the name or "handle" S.I.S., which they variously translate as System Intrusion Surveillance, Strategic Intense Sex, Sister in Silence, or other names, depending on the context. S.I.S. also refers to their sisterlike closeness and collaboration.

"The S.I.S. project is about the destabilization of 'self'," Kirkup and Naldi explain in an e-mail interview. "Therefore, the fact that we are two women in collaboration is important. Most other users, especially of MUDs and MOOs, tend to be male—90 percent, in fact." As the artists point out, "Some men will take the female identity to 'play' with other men, to 'try on' the female identity...to 'gain confidence' with women by exploring how they are approached by other men. It is still fixed within the male identity. Other lines [users' groups], such as the Gender Alternatives, are transvestite—they play within the 'theatrical' field—but it is a line dedicated to this area and an interesting place for women used to 'theatrical roles', i.e., adopting many guises to play within those blurred boundaries."

By videotaping themselves during the course of their on-line conversations, Kirkup and Naldi produce images that suggest a feminist alternative to the default mode of electronic communication, which is solitary and individual. These images, combined with texts of the conversations, focus not only on the fabricated identities on the Net but also on the negotiations between the two women.

While no fixed documents can quite capture the fluid process of communication on the Net, Kirkup and Naldi attempt to convey some of that in various videos and artifacts. These include a book titled *S.I.S.*, a magazine in both print and electronic formats (produced in collaboration with cyberspace theorist Sadie Plant), and plans for a video installation in Adelaide, Australia.

One would like to think of the sprawling, decentralized, self-governing Internet as the opposite of centralized surveillance systems. But for Kirkup and Naldi, they share some characteristics, which in turn link the artists' work as S.I.S. with their earlier pieces focusing on surveillance. Surveillance on the Net does not just occur through external regulations (federal intervention, such as the infamous Clipper Chip legisla-



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tion; "moderated" discussions on networks). As Kirkup and Naldi find, it even takes place as individual users monitor the difference between "what we are able to reveal within the 'theater' of the Internet and the boundaries imposed on our real-life experiences." Talking on the Net allows the artists to "try new positions, altered power relations, and sexualities." Speaking to others whose identities are unknown, they write, "causes us to reflect on our own assumptions/desires about others," even as they work together to construct an on-line fictional identity.

Kirkup and Naldi are interested in new locations for surveillance, such as the Internet, and also in new subjects for it, as in the case of James Bulger, the Liverpool child whose abduction by two other boys last year was recorded by shopping mall surveillance cameras. City police said if it had not been for the visual evidence, they would not have suspected such young perpetrators. "It seems that the cameras have the capacity to record 'social taboos', to make visible things which are culturally invisible or screened out," Kirkup and Naldi point out.

Search was made in collaboration with the Newcastle-Upon-Tyne police department. The artists performed a synchronized walk through the city center, which was recorded on the city's 16-camera public surveillance system and viewed on monitors at police headquarters. Installed by Northumbria Police in 1992, this is the most advanced surveillance system in Europe and is used as a model for other city-center security systems. What this system does, Kirkup and Naldi note, is turn the smallest units of time and space into sites of control, and private activities into public knowledge.

The surveillance images were captured on videotape by the artists and broadcast on Tyne Tees Television in the U.K. last summer and on Deep Dish TV in the U.S. in July. A TV viewer would watch 10-second sequences of two women walking separately through a city, as though the cameras were deliberately following them. (The tape is surprisingly beautiful, reminiscent of the stop-action images in Chris Marker's *La Jeteé*.) The artists' task was to find a form of intimacy and interpersonal communication through—and despite—the surveillance and public display system. When the two finally meet on the street, it is ambiguous whether the surveillance system has succeeded in tracking them to this final point, or the artists have somehow used the cameras to reach each other.

In this and other projects, Kirkup and Naldi manage to carve out an intimate social space within the widening networks of public vision.

Readers can communicate with Kirkup at 100114.164@compuserve.com and Naldi at 100265.1736@compuserve.com.

Laura U. Marks is a writer and curator living in Rochester, New York.

TOM NOONAN *director/actor* WHAT HAPPENED WAS

By Larry Loewinger

THERE ARE MANY ACTORS WHO WANT TO MAKE FILMS, but far fewer filmmakers who want to act. Tom Noonan does both. He is that

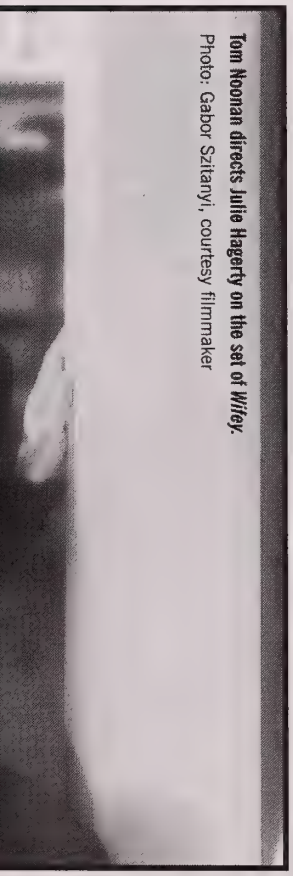


rare example of a successful actor in big budget Hollywood fare who now writes and directs intimate chamber films. Noonan's first feature, *What Happened Was*, is light years away from the kind of films he has acted in, such as *Heaven's Gate*, *FX*, *Wolfen*, and *Last Action Hero*. A story of two lonely people and their attempt at dating, *What Happened Was* won the coveted Grand Jury Prize for dramatic features at Sundance this past winter and was immediately picked up for distribution by

Samuel Goldwyn, which plans an early September release. But Noonan was unable to attend the Sundance awards ceremony, being tied up with his latest project, *Wifey*, a searing study of couples in the nineties which was filmed this spring at his farm in upstate New York. At the age of 42, Noonan is hitting his filmmaking stride.

Resiliency is the key word in Noonan's career. Born into a comfortable Catholic family, the 6'5" Noonan became a basketball phenomenon in high school. "After playing high school basketball," he recently confessed, "nothing made me nervous. That was the most nerve-wracking thing I had to do." Courted by colleges because of his athletic prowess, he turned away from basketball and went to Yale. Discontent, he dropped out after a few years in order to pursue a career in music.

Adrift in Boston in the middle seventies with a halting career and no income, Noonan once again switched direction. "In 1977," Noonan recalls, "I was sitting in my apartment in Boston. I had no money, no food, and the electric company had turned off the power. I asked myself, 'What do you want to do?' and decided it was time to go to New York." With some help from his friends and brother, the playwright John Ford Noonan, he entered the theater world.



Tom Noonan directs Julie Hagerty on the set of *Wifey*.
Photo: Gabor Szitanyi, courtesy filmmaker

By 1978 Noonan landed a major role in Sam Shepherd's *Buried Child*. "Because the play was such a hit and Sam Shepherd such a cultural icon," says Noonan, "everybody in Hollywood came to see it." The movie parts started coming in. During the course of *Buried Child*'s run, he appeared in four different movies, beginning with John Cassavetes' *Gloria*.

Noonan realized that acting could pay his rent, while writing would open the door to directing. "I have written dozens of screenplays, teleplays, and short stories," he recently admitted, but "I also realized that controlling the material was the most important way to get ahead." Writing did eventually lead to television directing. Noonan was hired by Laurel Entertainment to direct a couple of episodes of the syndicated series *Monsters*.

At the same time Noonan became a much sought after "bad guy" character actor in bigger and bigger Hollywood films during the eighties. By the early nineties, Noonan was again asking himself where he was headed. The roles he was getting, while rewarding, were not leading to a directing career. Meanwhile, his agent had submitted a script to the Sundance Institute, which was well received, and Noonan went to the Sundance writers' workshop in 1991.

"At Sundance," he explains, "you go up into the mountains with six or seven people like yourself, who have not yet had a screenplay produced. You hang around with famous screenwriters who read your scripts, take you seriously, talk about what writing is like. It is very inspiring." After Sundance, he sold a script to cable, which allowed him to take time off to figure out exactly what he wanted to write. By year's end, he had written *What Happened Was*.

"It was very different from my other things," he says. "It was much more personal, quieter, smaller, and doable. I didn't need to go out and ask for money." *What Happened Was* was originally staged in 1992 by the Paradise Theater Company, an East Village group Noonan and friends formed a decade before. That year he also returned to Utah for another Sundance workshop, this time in directing. With money from his own pocket, logistical help from friends and Sundance contacts, and Robin O'Hara and Scott Macaulay lined up as producers, Noonan had enough support to film an adaptation of his two-person play.

Noonan cast himself and Karen Sillas (a veteran of several Hal Hartley films) and began a long, workshop process that involved live performances, improvisations, and rewrites. (Not surprisingly, Noonan admires the work of actor-centered directors John Cassavetes and Mike Leigh.) How did Noonan manage to write, direct, and act in his own film? "At times it confuses other people to be acting one second and then me saying cut," he admits. "It takes awhile for people to trust you enough to act and let you direct them. But I find it very simple, because I am in the center of everything that is happening."

Noonan is either a very talented man, an egomaniac, or some combination of both. He, of course, has his own take on his talent. "Anyone who has done what I have done would have to have some delusions of grandeur," he confesses. "I find it amusing when people think they can do it all. I find myself somewhat ridiculous in my grandiose view of myself. I love Chekov plays with those characters who think they are in touch with the pulse of the world and are falling down stairs."

Maybe the distance between Noonan the actor in *The Last Action Hero* and Noonan the actor/director in *What Happened Was* is smaller than we think. In the Hollywood movie, he plays a cartoon-like killer; in his own film, he creates two vulnerable people who try to connect one

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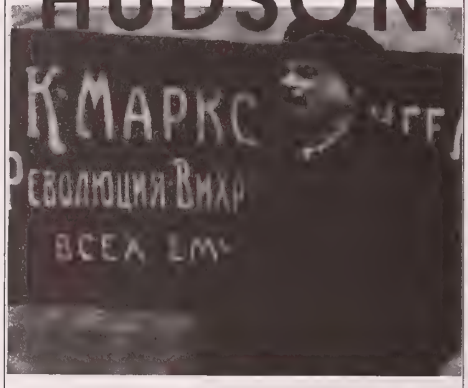
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night. But the psychological terrain he is mining includes both kinds of filmmaking. "I want to make films," he concludes, "that explore the dreams, fantasies, and nightmares people today keep hidden underneath their prescribed identities."

Larry Loewinger is a writer, audio engineer, and producer living in New York City.

OLIVIER JAHAN *associate director* DIRECTORS FORTNIGHT AT CANNES

By Howard Feinstein

IT'S NOT ALL BLACK TIE AND SHADES IN CANNES. Outside the edges of the glamorous photographs snapped near the Palais du Cinéma are the serious cinephiles who line up outside the Noga Hilton to fill its 850-seat basement theater. Here they screen works in the 26-year-old Directors Fortnight (Quinzaine des Réalisateurs)—the post-'68 alternative to the Cannes "establishment"—that operates independently of the main festival under the auspices of the French Directors Guild (Société des Réalisateurs des Films).

The associate director of the Fortnight—and a U.S. indie expert—is a mellow, articulate, bespectacled, and handsome 38-year-old Parisian named Olivier Jahan. His pilgrimage to New York every March offers filmmakers a tremendous, if odds-off, opportunity to earn the Fortnight's imprimatur. (The Independent Feature Project acts as liaison for the New York screenings. "The IFP can't make choices," Jahan notes. The filmmaker is responsible for projection costs. If a work is chosen, the maker is responsible for subtitling and blowing it up to 35mm.)

"This is not the best year we have had for American independents in the Fortnight," says Jahan at one of the café tables in front of the huge tent where the Fortnight holds press conferences and sells film books. "We didn't see too many excellent movies in New York this year. We did not pick one single American movie there. Eventually, though, some of the films were sent to Paris." Boaz Yakin's *Fresh*, Hal Hartley's *Amateur*, and Ang Lee's *Eat Drink Man Woman* took three of the 17



Courtesy Olivier Jahan

available spots; overall, the selection committee considered 500 titles from around the world. (In '93, *Ruby in Paradise*, *Menace II Society*, and *Mi Vida Loca* all had their non-domestic premieres here.)

The Fortnight accepts only fiction features. If you have a demanding narrative, it is probably not the right venue. Rather, "Critics Week [Semaine de la Critique, a section of seven films selected by a panel of international critics] should be the place for difficult features," Jahan says. "We don't think experimental movies do so well in Cannes. It doesn't work anymore. We want the films to be well-received." Gone are the days when the Fortnight presented loopy U.S. indies (Roger Corman's *The Trip*, Paul Morrissey's *Heat*, Tobe Hooper's *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Bob Rafelson's *Head*) and experimental ones (Bruce Baillie's *All My Life*, Carolee Schneemann's *Fuses*, Ed Emshwiller's *Image, Flesh, and Voice*, Michael Snow's *Back and Forth*).

The relationship between the Fortnight and the main sections (the competition and its stepsister, the noncompeting Un Certain Regard) is tenuous. "We don't talk," Jahan says. "We only communicate with the crew that runs the festival." He calls the main section the 'Bunker', a reference to the forbidding, fortress-like architecture of the new Palais, which several years ago replaced the charming structure that was leveled to accommodate the Noga Hilton. (The Fortnight's underground theater was a concession by the developers.)

The Fortnight receives $400,000 from the Centre National du Cinéma—only 1/25th of what the main festival gets. As if that discrepancy weren't enough, the Fortnight also loses titles to the Bunker, which has more clout. (Festival director Gilles Jacob can strike deals with producers and studios, using the promise of a slot in the competition to lure work to Un Certain Regard.) The deck is stacked against the Fortnight, but full houses indicate its determination and success.

"I think what is important about the Fortnight is the way films are treated," he says. "The public is really different than for the official sections. Films like Hal Hartley's could have taken enormous risks in the Bunker, but it found its way with us."

This year, ironically, the main festival selected Jahan's first directorial effort, *Speak after the Beep*, as a competing short. "It is a very small movie," he says, "shot in 35mm. It is about a night in Paris. The main character is a girl, who tells lies on the phone and ends up alone." He begins a second short this summer.

Jahan's film career has been remarkably circuitous. He began as an assistant director at the age of 17 ("To be on a set was my dream"). The executive producer on that project was Pierre-Henri Deleau, who was also the Fortnight director. Deleau offered him a job with the Fortnight, but Jahan accepted only two years later. His position is part-time, so he has supplemented his income over the years as an advisor to other festivals, editor, publicist, distributor's assistant, and casting agent.

"Gradually, I became more involved with festivals and less with other parts of filmmaking. In the last 10 years, I have done only festivals." He is currently working on FIPA, a TV festival that takes place in Cannes in January.

Based on his experience—Jahan watched over 120 U.S. indie films over the past year—what can he suggest to aspiring directors here?

"Sometimes with American independent films," he says tactfully, "you get to the point where you don't understand why they were made. They might not have a structure. If you don't have someone putting money up, be cautious of what you put on the screen.

"We accept imperfect works, but American independents need advisors. They don't have help from the government, like in France, where films are made mostly in the system, and there are people overseeing the scripts.

"Don't do a movie without checking it out, just because you want to do a movie. The first piece of advice I would give to independent filmmakers: Get a producer."

Jahan knows of what he speaks. Over the years, the Fortnight has brought to the attention of the world film community directors like Spike Lee, Wayne Wang, Jim Jarmusch, Susan Seidelman, Atom Egoyan, Denys Arcand, Charles Burnett, and Stacy Cochran. Not to mention a couple of unknowns named Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Martin Scorsese.

Message received.

Howard Feinstein is a film journalist living in New York.

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BY MICHAEL FOX





Distributors and producers of nontheatrical releases hook up at the National Education Media Market

Photos: Julie Finn, courtesy NEMM

NEITHER AS FRANTIC AS CANNES nor as sexy as Sundance, the National Educational Media Market has emerged as the primary meeting place in the United States for distributors and filmmakers catering to the nontheatrical market. And as that business has fragmented from high-priced films to ubiquitous and cheap videotapes, the eight-year-old market has also become an increasingly important forum for swapping information and monitoring trends.

The prominence of the National Educational Media Market (NEMM) belies its truly humble origins. For years, the Oakland-based National Educational Film and Video Festival simply mailed a list to distributors of the films it screened. This typewritten compilation generated so much interest that the festival established a market as an adjunct. The NEMM received a major boost four years ago when the Educational Film Library Association held its annual American Film Festival in San Francisco: East Coast distributors who came for the AFF also checked out the market—and have returned ever since.

Buyers are not the only constituency to recognize the prominence of the NEMM. "Filmmakers used to seek out distributors," says former filmmaker and longtime market director Kate Spohr. "Now they wait for the market."

The NEMM's growth also coincided with the decline and eventual demise in 1993 of the American Film Festival. The AFF brought together distributors and the teachers and librarians who are their customers, in addition to offering seminars and screenings. But when travel budgets evaporated in the late eighties, users stopped attending the show.

These days, the gap between the National Educational Film Festival and its rapidly growing offshoot is wider than organizers would like. The distributors spend long days at the market activities at the Oakland Convention Center and the informal evening receptions at the adjacent Parc Oakland Hotel. Consequently, they rarely attend the festival screenings at the Oakland Museum and the Exploratorium across the Bay Bridge in San Francisco, which are geared to the public.

The 24th annual festival opened with the world premiere of Susan Friedman's *Ki Ho'Alu, That's Slack Key Guitar* and featured several other premieres, such as Sybil Delgaudio and Patty Wineapple's *Animated Women*, a series of programs on animators Faith Hubley, Joanna Priestly, and Ruth Peyser. Billing itself as the largest showcase in the country for independently produced documentaries, the festival lineup also included Susan Todd and Andrew Young's *Lives in Hazard* and David Paperny's *The Broadcast Tapes of Dr. Peter*, as well as a host of work by Northern California filmmakers, including George Csicsery's *N Is a Number: A Portrait of Paul Erdos* and Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco's *Cuba Va: The Challenge of the Next Generation.*

The 1,400 entries submitted to the festival—many of which were entered by their distributors—compete for Gold and Silver Apples. The awards have increased in prestige in recent years, partly because of the disappearance of the AFF and its blue ribbons. More importantly, as teachers and librarians are traveling less, they have less opportunity to view work—and thus pay closer

attention to which films receive awards. "NEFV's name isn't as big as Caldecott [a major children's book award] yet, but it's the only thing," says Los Angeles-based consultant Debra Franco. Oakland public school students evaluate entries that are intended for classroom use (*Lives in Hazard* was the 7th-12th grade winner), so an award grabs the attention of distributors as an indicator of commercial potential.

The National Educational Media Market doesn't draw teachers or librarians, who are reached by distributors through a combination of direct mail catalogs and sales representatives. It does attract about 300 titles from around the country at an entry fee of $60 ($30 for productions already entered into the festival competition). And with 47 distributors represented (up from 29 in 1993), the market is clearly a magnet for companies looking for new product.

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ational Media Market

This year's shoppers (who purchased a one, two, or three-day Buyer Pass) ranged from Phoenix/ BFA Films & Video, a St. Louis company that offers 5,000 titles, to East West Media of Central Point, Oregon, "a boutique distribution house that specializes in topical programs dealing with social issues, and that works with two or three select productions a year." Most distributors have staked out niches, such as Churchill Media, a large Los Angeles company that specializes in health and social documentary, and Medfilms of Tucson, a distributor of training videos on safety and compliance. Many reputable distributors of independent work were in attendance this year, including Bullfrog Films, the Canadian Broadcast Corporation, Fanlight Productions, Filmmakers Library, and New Day Films. Television acquisition representatives from as far away as Spain, Germany, Sweden and Denmark were also on hand.

The feeding frenzy centers on two deceptively calm meeting rooms outfitted with dozens of headphone-equipped viewing stations. Each distributor is assigned a spot and signs out tapes for viewing, with an industrious buyer such as Chip Taylor (whose Derry, New Hampshire-based company carries a wide range of subjects) watching as many as 150 to 200 programs in the course of the three-day event.

Each producer receives a log of the buyers who looked at his or her piece. This facilitates the matchmaking process, especially for the approximately 150 filmmakers (primarily from the West Coast) who attend the receptions and meet the buyers in person. However, as distributors frequently dismiss a tape after a few minutes, this can lead to the occasional tense moment when an unwitting filmmaker asks in so many words, "What do you think of how I've spent the last two years of my life?"

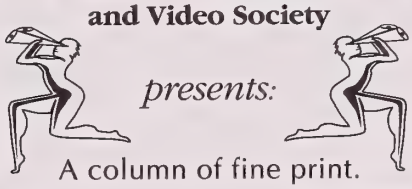
An odd dynamic now prevails in the nontheatrical market: Competition for good films is highly intense (a few films each year receive up to a dozen offers at the market, Spohr reports) at the same time that profit margins are being squeezed. As the video industry has matured, successful companies have learned to market specific areas of interest such as spirituality and inner growth, alternative music, and gay and lesbian works. "It's harder and harder to make money in video," Franco said in a panel discussion titled "Distribution: Superhighway to the Future," "unless you have a clear seller in a segmented, in-place market."

The lessons for filmmakers are numerous. The plummeting prices of home videos have encouraged distributors to stock their catalogs through acquisition rather than production. But while the increased competition for distribution rights may have improved the deals that filmmakers can negotiate (although advances and completion funds remain fantasies), the choice of distributor should be predicated on more than simply the highest bid. A company's proven track record with similarly themed material portends greater sales—and greater royalties to the producer—than a higher percentage offered by a distributor without experience or acumen in that specialty market. Or as Winifred Scherrer of Bullfrog



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During the 1993 New Orleans Film and Video Festival, Cinema 16 (the independent film division of the society) showed ninety films in the space of one week. This was one of the largest concentrations of independent films shown last year in North America. For this year's festival, Cinema 16 plans to show approximately that many films again. We are also going to offer a pass that will get you into **all** of them for a grand total of twenty dollars. If you would like one of these passes, please write or call immediately. (The dates of the 1994 New Orleans Film and Video Festival are Oct 7 through Oct 13. The location is the French Quarter of New Orleans. Cinema 16 shows features and shorts in super-8, 16mm and video. This pass is **not** good for the large-budget 35 mm films of the festival which are **not** shown in Cinema 16's theater.)

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Films, an Oley, Pennsylvania-based distributor of environmental films, notes, "I think it's most valuable for a filmmaker to find a distributor as an ally."

Franco is convinced buyers should be used as a resource during the development and production stages, long before a film is finished. "A good distributor will know what their market will buy—but that doesn't make them a good filmmaker," she says. "But any filmmaker who wants to make a film that will reach a market should listen to distributors and users." As one distributor pointed out, there isn't room for the 1,200 nontheatrical films produced every year.

"If you expect to make money," Franco declares, "you have to think like a marketer." She advises that, in addition to soliciting feedback while making the film, producers explore whether there's a market beyond the purely educational. It's also smart to join filmmaker organizations or network to find out about deals that other producers have made.

The seminar portion of the market was aimed primarily at filmmakers, as buyers spent most of their time hunkered down in front of VCRs. The range of real-world topics included "Fundraising Basics," "Making Sense of Multimedia Platforms," "Creative Marketing for Indies," "The Brave New World of Copyright Law," "Finding the Right Publisher for Your Multimedia Title," and "Positioning Your Project for Success." A series of "Free-For-Alls," hour-long informal informational sessions, was also offered on subjects like "Video on Demand" (with Tim Gunn of National Video Resources), "Documentarians Unite!" (with the International Documentary Association's Betsy McLane), and "Innovations in Animation."

For all the vitality in the educational market, it's not the easiest place to make a living. Small distributors are either struggling to hang on or contemplating selling out to a bigger publisher. And, of course, making films continues to be a financial struggle. "A lot of our films are the first, second, or last films by a producer," says Ben Achtenberg of Fanlight Productions, a Massachusetts-based distributor, the implication being that the best films—which are often the most personal and deeply felt—are also the last works before a filmmaker shifts to a career in which he or she can earn a living.

Nonetheless, market director Kate Spohr has guided the National Educational Media Market to steady growth every year. And for distributors, who can scout 300 new films in a single expedition, there is no matching the convenience. In fact, Chip Taylor says, "I wish New York and Chicago would have one of these. This market needs to expand."

Michael Fox is a critic and columnist for SF Weekly, Film/Tape World, *and other Bay Area publications.*

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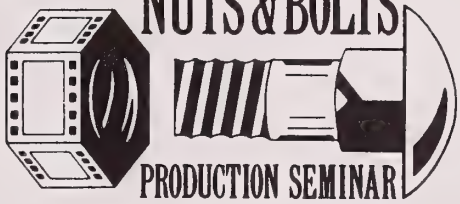
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THREADING CAMERAS ISN'T ENOUGH:

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

Hollywood Narrative, Difference, & Introductory Filmmaking

With film programs across the country embattled by declining budgets and even disbanding, the introductory filmmaking course can turn from a creative conservatory into a highly charged battleground. At the film program at Ithaca College, where I teach, some administrators are interminably distressed by the declining pool of 18-year-olds in the economically battered Northeast who can afford the nearly $20,000 tuition, room, and board. Consequently, the beginning film production class has been transformed into a potent marketing tool to decimate our competitors: students are required to enroll in it their first year, a big selling point for high school students eager to get their hands on 16mm filmmaking equipment. As a result, "Intro" endures the most criticism and debate when it detours from students' fantasies of assimilation into dominant media practice.

In my years of teaching feminist media theory and political documentary, *no one* has ever criticized my assignments, my film or book selections, or my intellectual goals. Not so with introductory film production—by comparison, a lower-level course focused on skills, strategies, and surveys. Everyone—departmental chairs, faculty, parents, teaching assistants, students not even enrolled in the class—will fret about whether you teach "classical Hollywood narrative" or "marketable, professional, filmmaking skills." This presents a formidable pedagogical conundrum: How do you detoxify students of the inaccessible Hollywood dream and free them to produce work in their own voices? How do you convince them that their differences are what matter most, not their slavish conformity to Hollywood plots, desires, and representational systems?

As a practical way of organizing classes and critiques, multiculturalism provides some answers. It's best seen not as some sort of postmodern theory lashing out against master narratives, but as an offensive strategy to produce films out of one's own experiences. A truly radical multiculturalism destroys the larger cultural imperatives towards sameness and the erasure of ideological and personal conflict. And it is exactly this manufacturing of sameness—typified in the teaching of classical Hollywood narrative style—that immobilizes

large portions of beginning filmmakers, especially women and people of color. Beginning students become paralyzed; they assume they lack "talent" if they don't conform to these "standards" or don't tell "those kind of stories." Some students devalue their own films about their mother's Italian immigrant family in the Adirondacks, or about their experiences with depression, as not "real narrative films." They have never encountered stories like these at "the real movies" of shopping mall multiplexes.

But a professor must be prepared for battle if she decides to deviate from "classic" filmmaking into more multicultural domains. And, further, she shouldn't presume that showing more diverse films and creating assignments focused on students' own experiences will create a media revolution that will annihilate racism, sexism, and homophobia. It is not that easy.

Last year I taught a film by Winnipeg Film Group feminist filmmakers Tracy Traeger and Shawna Dempsey called *We're Talking Vulva*. Borrowing from music video styles, the film features a singer dressed up as a vulva, rapping about her various functions. The film's frank, feminist discussion of female genitalia disturbed some male students. One inquired why I programmed this film. (The students all know that I teach a course in feminist media theory.) I answered that I was was intrigued by its combination of different aesthetic strategies to express some bold feminist content. The discussion exploded—and two interesting things happened. As most educators know, male students generally feel less anxiety speaking vigorously in discussions. But in this case, because the film raised the specter of the female body, the women served as discursive experts while the men occupied a less dominant position. Second, the students learned that teachers can have definite theoretical orientations.

When guiding students through a wide swathe of filmic strategies, it is *mandatory* to communicate your own political and aesthetic positions so students know your viewpoint and can argue with you. Some film teachers camouflage their positions. I consider this tactic unethical and dishonest. This presumed "neutrality" derails conflicts over work or anything bordering on the political. A good film production teacher should function as a lightning rod, sparking ideas and creating space for debate. While this means explaining one's positions, it also means accepting that not all students will agree with you.

DEFENSE & OFFENSE, THEORY & PRACTICE

While Ithaca College's Roy H. Park School of Communications has always positioned itself as a "hands-on" professional program, our cinema curriculum actually reflects a much more traditional arts and humanities approach. Like media faculty everywhere, we have fought for and implemented a program integrating theory and practice. On the most obvious level, no student may enroll in any film production course without a semester of a companion theory course. For instance, non-fiction film theory serves as the prerequisite for non-fiction production. Introduction to film aesthetics and analysis is the prerequisite for beginning filmmaking. Linking theory and practice is so much a part of our everyday operations and curricular assumptions we rarely debate it anymore, a significant paradigm shift from the more argumentative early 1980s. As one of my newer colleagues, John Hess, puts it, whether the student is making a film or writing a paper, we assume he or she is engaged in some sort of intellectual inquiry.

As a text, we use Bruce Kawin's *How Movies Work*, a general survey of genres, theory, filmmaking techniques, and the Hollywood industry. Over the years, we have dumped texts stressing filmmaking techniques and equipment for three reasons: first, the equipment these books meticulously describe never matches our own 16mm gear; second, these texts overemphasize technology and techniques beyond the reach of beginners; third, they neutralize political and theoretical issues, turning them into fairly instrumental technical problems.

The most successful introductory filmmaking classes spend more time on critique of student work than on explication of technology. Students arrive intimidated by 16mm technologies, so we try to frame cameras and flatbeds as machines to be used for the student's own ends, rather than as objects of fetishistic desire. This decentering of film technology (a very politically charged intervention in this extremely well equipped, state-of-the-art school) is a much more effective way to empower women students who often suffer from technophobia. We bolster student confidence in operating equipment through individualized tutorials with our teaching assistants, a more effective way to develop minimal exposure and focus skills than large group sessions, where women and minority students in particular may feel like outsiders.

Within this more democratic framework, a concept of struggle replaces the outmoded concept of professionalism. Students struggle with operating equipment, learning equipment check-out, dealing with the lab, generating an idea, submitting to critiques. This terrain is volcanic: there will be pitched battles with students in the initial classes about whether they will ever learn "real" filmmaking, i.e. classical Hollywood style. That style is so tattooed into our unconscious that students can't even see it. But making narrative films with seamless editing, changes in image size and camera angle, and cuts in action is perhaps the most difficult, complex task for a student still learning how to thread film into a Bell and Howell Filmo.

Yet my students have enormous psychological and political investments, whether consciously or unconsciously, in Hollywood-style filmmaking. Therefore, their first assignment is a short narrative continuity film shot in our communications building. Nearly all the students find it difficult to grasp this style. It looms over them so naturally—almost like the weather—they never consider how it is constructed. After this assignment, most are content to begin at the beginning and learn how to express themselves through film, rather than imitate narrative rules.

CRITIQUES: DISPENSING THE MYTHS OF CREATIVITY

Students often are so consumed with executing projects on the micro-level they can't access the more macro-levels of ideology and aesthetics without faculty guidance. When I deploy a more theoretical language to explain the political issues of representation and power raised when a student photographs Ithaca's small black community with a travelling surveillance shot from the inside of his or her new Volvo, the students listen more intently. No longer "just my opinion," my comments become part of a larger argument on culture and representation that includes them as participants.

Some of my colleagues, in contrast, conceive of the production classroom as a therapy group that nurtures students' individual, artistic, emotional expression—an idiosyncrasy of art schools mired in 19th century conceptions of the artist as an isolated artisan exploring subjectivity. In the context of an industry-oriented professional school like the Park School, this position is not as reactionary as it might initially seem; any focus on individuality and personal expression combats the more robotic approach of merely prepping students for entry-level jobs.

However, too much reliance on individuality isolates students, enforcing competition in a line of creative work that requires the cooperation of other people—to hold lights, move dollies, serve as actors. Too much of an obsession with creativity, in my own experience, erects a covert class system. Only upper-class students, who have had access to camcorders, rental videos, and well-heeled suburban schools that taught media production, are deemed "creative." Women and minority students are alienated and shop for a new major.

We toss out terms like creativity, individual expression, talent, feelings, searches for authenticity, and instead work to make the classroom a partici-

patory, team environment where different sections possess what one student terms "section pride." Competition is replaced by collective identity. Our film production classrooms are charged, yet supportive, arenas where students struggle over skills acquisition, the generation of ideas specific to their experiences, and the execution of technical and creative tasks.

In critiques, the easiest way to broach the difficult issues of politics and representation is to actually concentrate on the formal and technical construction of their work first: we analyze composition, lighting, exposure, focus, and editing as specifically as possible. Then, we find remedies. We always focus on whether the student's concept is conveyed clearly. If a film crosses into racist representation, students can draw on the formal parts of the critique to explain how and why, rather than simply to assert. Ironically, this inversion of form over content actually sparks much more complex discussions about the politics of representation.

REVISIONS: LIABILITIES INTO ASSETS

Filmmaking classes have simple goals: to make filmmaking, one of the most inaccessible and expensive of all the arts, accessible. Mistakes like exposure problems cannot be repaired as easily as argumentative errors in film theory papers. Films require money, a scarce resource for most students. Therefore, we rarely suggest reshooting. Rather, we direct students to forge a film from out-takes in the bins. This strategy concentrates on editing, rather than reshooting, and does not require money for film stock. Some student and faculty detractors denigrate the resulting films as avant-garde compilations. However, filmmaking students see them as inexpensive, fascinating solutions to production problems.

One phrase my teaching partner, Marcelle Pecot, and I repeat over and over is "turn your liabilities into your assets." If you don't have lots of lights, use what you have. If you can't deal with actors, make a film without them. If you can't figure out narrative continuity, find a new style you understand. If your film is overexposed, hand-color it. If your voiceover sounds stilted, reedit your footage. We focus on process, not product.

In addition, no matter how "creative" our students want to be, we institute limitations on how much footage they can shoot for each of the three assignments. We limit them in the first assignment to 50 feet of rushes, and in the final two assignments to 200 feet. These restrictions foreground ideas and flatten out the class privilege that allows some students not even to think about how much it costs to shoot 1,000 feet of reversal. Besides equalizing financial and class differences, students can feel more empowered editing smaller amounts of footage.

To preempt the fascination with Hollywood, we screen a wide range of experimental, documentary, and narrative films to provide different role models and artistic strategies. We prefer shorter works, because features depend so much on structure that their visual and conceptual strategies can be hard for the beginner to decipher. We utilize a multicultural framework in our selection, but we rarely discuss the term "multicultural." We have screened everything from Yugoslavian animation, to Soviet documentaries, to African-American alternative rap films, to Marlon Riggs' *Tongues Untied*, to the early works of Gus Van Sant, to alternative animation by Joanna Priestly, to a British black feminist film called *The Body Beautiful*, to clips from *The Godfather*, to *Meshes in the Afternoon* .

Screening the kinds of films not normally available in video stores, positions spectatorship as something more than recreational viewing. During the lectures, we stress visual and conceptual strategies. We compare and contrast work, assessing their differences in content, argument, and visualization. We often use the terribly consumerist metaphor of "shopping for strategies" to describe how students should engage with the work as active filmmakers, rather than as passive viewers.

Working under this new system of diversification for the last two years, we've never had a student complain about screenings. Because students do not wish to miss something they would have no other access to, attendance is high.

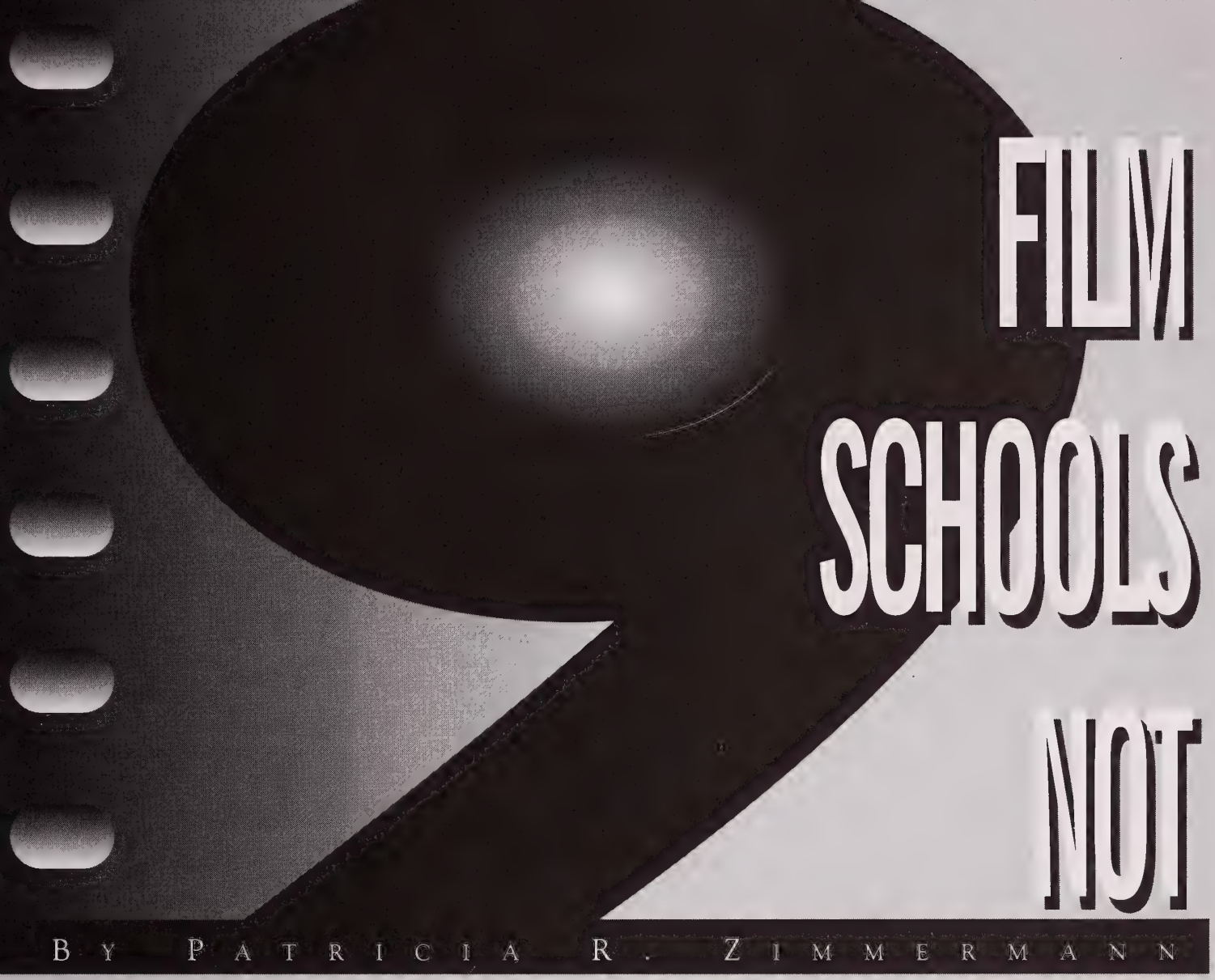
REIMAGINED STUDENT FILMS, NEW PUBLIC SPHERES

At the semester's end, we publicly screen the films created by our introductory production class. The 200-seat auditorium bulges with friends and parents. The last assignment, dubbed the "personal explorations" film project, requires a three-minute film revealing a unique personal story. Our only guideline is that at least two different filmmaking strategies, such as documentary and narrative, or experimental and diary, be combined. Most of the students fashion films from their immediate lives: One woman made a powerful film about her inability to deal with her mother's mastectomy. An animated film chronicled a young man in the dorm trying to avoid eating ice cream. One film explored looking for a research book in the library, shot entirely from a handheld point of view with eerie music. The most successful of these films deployed innovative, well focused, and well exposed shooting to relate a very detailed, unique story. However, all was not well in paradise.

Two white male students, distressed that we were not teaching horror, war, detective film styles, and special effects, screened films criticizing us and our assignments. These films contended the Park School censored their creativity by prohibiting narrative filmmaking and enforcing the production of avant-garde feminist films. Ironically, both of these "interventions" depended on documentary and avant-garde techniques: analytical intertitles, direct address, metaphorical imagery, and montage editing. One beautifully photographed and viscerally edited film featured two men clad in military attire fighting each other, interrupted by intertitles decrying the Park School as a rabid censor. The second film featured a young man walking around campus, encountering various roadblocks (bands of people or construction barriers) with a voiceover excoriating, "Ban regular filmmaking." His work utilized extremely surrealistic shooting and mise-en-scene. What interested me about these projects was not their protest, which in some perverse way I actually enjoyed, but how it revealed the embattled nature of any attempt to decenter the dominant mode. In my undergraduate days, the class rebels were the one or two women who ventured into film production. When white male students addicted to classical narratives with fight scenes become class rebels, we know that our efforts to pluralize film screenings and extend the range of debate in critiques has been effective.

Despite the proliferation of pedagogical theories, despite the national debates on political correctness and multiculturalism, teachers still need to learn how to teach on a much more micro-level. New faculty in my department never ask how to be more multicultural in their classrooms. They ask what films to show, or how to deal with a racist film project characterizing a black man as a drug-dealing criminal. Theory is woven into film production through immersion, debate, interaction. A good class also provides something else for students—a utopian zone where they can create and argue without punishment. When students discover something that changes how they think about visual representation and theory, it makes the debates feel physical, worth fighting for, part of one's life. For those of us who teach filmmaking at the beginning level, focus and exposure, in both its technical and ideological meanings, is the goal.

Patricia R. Zimmermann is an Associate Professor of Cinema & Photography at Ithaca College. This essay is excerpted from her chapter in the forthcoming anthology Shared Differences: Multiculturalism and Media Education *(Univ. of Illinois Press).*



FILM SCHOOLS NOT TO BE OVERLOOKED

BY PATRICIA R. ZIMMERMANN

EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT NYU, USC, AND UCLA. BUT THESE ARE NOT THE ONLY PLACES TO GET A GOOD FILM EDUCATION. WHAT IS MORE, INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION IS ALIVE AND WELL AT MANY OF THE SMALLER CREATIVE OUTPOSTS AROUND THE COUNTRY. THE FOLLOWING IS A SAMPLING OF SOME OF THESE FILM PROGRAMS.

Editor's note: In the space of a magazine article, it's impossible to provide a listing of film programs that is in any way comprehensive, or even partially so. What these nine profiles are meant to demonstrate is the wide variety of strong degree programs committed to independent film and the invigoration of film culture. As this article demonstrates, students need not limit themselves to New York and Los Angeles, but can choose from top quality graduate and undergraduate programs, in urban and rural settings, art schools and universities, all across the country.

IN THE SEVENTIES, YOU STUDIED FILM TO AVOID CLASSES IN NIETZSCHE AND Plato. You absorbed technical skills from friends at midnight in decrepit editing rooms; scrutinized classics like *The Big Sleep* and *Battleship Potemkin*; shot bizarre shorts while fantasizing about entry into Hollywood or underground cinema. You'd hang out at movie theaters, gobbling up any film from any country; become fluent in film slang; write papers on narrative structure in Jacques Tati.

Those days are as ancient as the Doobie Brothers. The delightful chaos of university-level film studies during the sixties and seventies has seasoned into curricula that interrogate representation and examine the filmmaker's position as a producer of visual culture. Brawls over theory and practice have mellowed into discussions on the construction of degree programs that produce thinking, ethical individuals.

In the seventies, film schools fell into opposing camps: the majors (Univerity of Southern California, University of California-Los Angeles, New York University, Columbia University) were oriented toward narratives done in crews, while the art schools (the Art Institute of Chicago, the San Francisco Art Institute, Cooper Union) promoted individual, non-narrative work. These institutions embodied the antagonisms between business and art, Hollywood and avant-garde, the industry and the "underground." Today, schools have entered more sophisticated territory, straddling the philosophical divide between pre-professional training and humanities-based interrogation.

Ken Dancyger, chair of the undergraduate program in film at NYU, says, "Because everything is changing so quickly—the industry, the internationalization of media, academic work in film studies, technology—we who work in film schools are often not sure what to do next: Should you affiliate with the industry or be distanced from them? What is necessary is training people for the next generation of film, and that means moving away from all of these vocational mythologies."

Film departments no longer obsess over proficiency in the operation of Arriflex cameras and Moviolas. Many faculty members debunk the myth of film school as a training ground for entry level jobs. In a major shift from the seventies, professors and administrators at a wide variety of schools emphasize liberal arts as the academic bedrock of filmmaking. One professor declared, "We are in the business of granting college degrees that have some larger meaning, not serving as employment agencies for multinational corporations."

Many film schools now define themselves as deliberately outside the industry. But for most people, the top film schools are NYU, USC, and UCLA, all of which retain and promote their high-profile industry connections. In the world of higher education, these schools dominate the popular consciousness: they are seen as synonymous with access to the commercial film industry and successful careers. Their glossy promotional materials list alumni who are important industry executives, craftspeople, and directors. Big names like Steven Spielberg, Johnny Carson, and David Geffen pepper the scholarship and advisory boards at USC. Companies like Capital Cities/ABC, Walt Disney, MGM, Viacom, and Sony sponsored UCLA's Festival '93.

These days, NYU, USC, and UCLA prevail as the largest graduate film programs in the country. They function much like 1940s Hollywood studios, albeit with many independent filmmakers holding faculty appointments and emerging from their ranks. NYU is known for its independent, European inflection; UCLA for a fierce tradition of auteur work; USC for school-sponsored films with studio-style crews.

UCLA, the alma mater of such notable independents as Alex Cox, Charles Burnett, and Julie Dash, is the only public institution of the three. Currently the program is engaged in a controversial redirection of its curriculum: the undergraduate program, once eliminated, will be revived. Unlike USC, where productions are financed and owned by the school, UCLA has been violently debating a reorganization toward large-scale, department-controlled production with hierarchical crews.

NYU, USC, and UCLA can marshal enormous resources compared to lesser known schools. They have much more equipment than even state-run studios in developing countries. They are centrally organized, with large administrative staffs including development directors, public relations consultants, and numerous support staff. USC actually has a director of student-industry relations who, for all intents and purposes, functions as an agent for students.

Located in the vortex of the two most important production centers in the U.S.—New York and Los Angeles—these programs engage in symbiosis with the industry, borrowing professionals as adjuncts, hosting preview screenings and regularly bringing in guests.

It must be said, however, that all three programs include strands that branch away from Hollywood-style filmmaking. While fundraising and alumni outreach highlights alliances with Hollywood, the faculty publications and productions constitute some of the most imaginative work in academia. Critical studies faculty at these institutions encompass the cutting edge in postmodernism, identity politics, feminism, international/national cinemas, and cultural studies.

Graduates of the "big three" do bear a certain cachet in the industry, have access to high-profile internships, and benefit from niceties like special screenings of student work for industry executives. Their classrooms are filled with an endless stream of industry guests almost unimaginable in other educational contexts. These film schools also have many more students than most of the programs described here: 1,000 undergrads at NYU compared to 20 at Iowa.

This article focuses on a number of superior film schools that are often overshadowed by the "big three," programs that also represent the diversity that defines higher education in film in the nineties. These smaller programs often demonstrate a commitment to independent film that far surpasses the more illustrious schools. Film schools on the periphery are the incubators of independent filmmaking, often defining themselves as outposts of regional cinema. Rather than producing workers for the industry, these schools see themselves as educating active producers who will make choices outside of commercial norms and give voice to those on the margins.

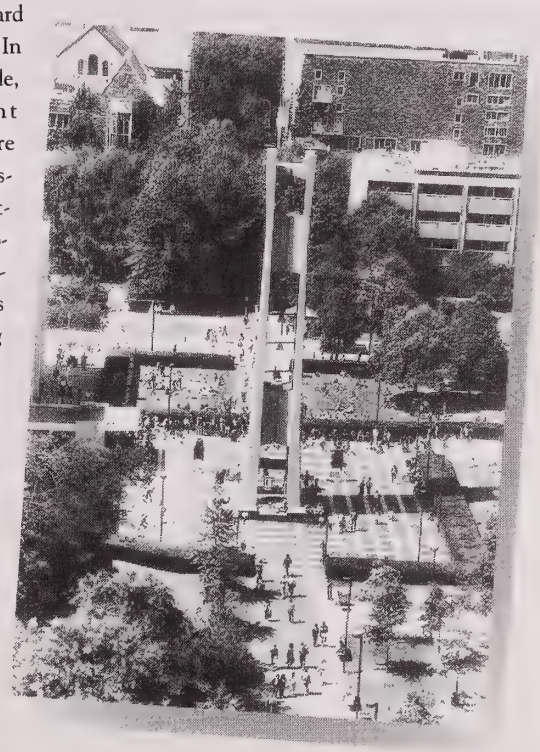
As NYU's Ken Dancyger reflects, "What is necessary is training people for the next generation of communications... We are in a very transitional phase: we need schools talking to each other, rather than operating like rivals."

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

CONTACT: *Dr. Howard Myrick, chair, (215) 204-8423.*
DEGREES: *B.A, M.F.A.; Ph.D.*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 1,000; grad: 70-80*
FACULTY: *22 full-time; 25 part-time; 16:1 student-teacher ratio*
BASIC TUITION: *$5,000 undergrad; $7,000 grad (out of state).*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Julie Gustafson, Eran Preis, Warren Bass, David Parry, Peter d'Agostino, Alan Powell, Jeff Rush*
ALUMNI: *Lise Yasui, Wendy Wienberg, Thomas Ott, Jan Krawitz, Radha Barwajaz, Nina Gilberty, Daw-ming-Lee, Wolfgang Held*

"We're not here for TV commercials, Hollywood narrative, or music videos," says Warren Bass, director of the graduate program in Film and Television. Begun in 1971 as a program dedicated to documentary, this vital curriculum has broadened over the years to include independent narrative and experimental film. Temple University's film program is still considered this country's preeminent center for documentary. Temple students have won many prizes for their films, including two Academy Award nominations. In the last decade, independent fiction there has also blossomed, resulting in the production of feature films including *Masala*, *The Pope of Utah*, and *Criminal*.



The Bell Tower at Temple University's main campus in downtown Philadelphia. Courtesy Temple University

Both graduate and undergraduate degree programs emphasize the relationship between social and artistic realms. According to Bass, both programs are committed to "producing work that challenges the status quo." Bass says Temple's program has established a long-term commitment to independent cinema, which is reflected by its faculty, screenings, and alumni.

Although the program is housed in a 25-year-old facility, many teachers claim the space limitation helps maintain small production classes with often as few as eight students. The undergraduate program is considered by faculty to be unwieldy, with very large classes and a student body with diverse interests ranging from broadcasting, to filmmaking, to critical studies. The program is undergoing massive reorganization. Proposed for implementation in the fall of 1995, it will split into mass media/telecommunications and film/media arts.

The graduate program is a different story. With some of the most highly competitive admissions standards in the country, it is harder to get into than medical or law school. Only 15 graduate students are accepted each year. The program splits coursework between film, video, and screenwriting. Students take comprehensive exams in critical studies, which comprise half of their MFA work.

Temple boasts a highly visible visiting artist program which exclusively features independents. It has recently initiated a guest professorship; Michelle Parkerson, Jill Godmilow, and Richard Leacock have held semester appointments. With its own processing lab, 24-hour access for graduate students, and almost no tuition during the final year of the MFA, Temple provides a high level of support for thesis projects. Bass contends it is difficult to average out the cost of MFA productions because some students have ventured into the realm of independent features—with projects costing from $30,000 to $2 million. He guesses the average cost of a thesis film is $15,000 to $20,000, with sizable grant support from the university.

"Temple's film program has all the advantages and disadvantages of a big city," declares Bass, "but in the end, it is a rich place to make films. There is no shortage of topics."

OHIO UNIVERSITY

Athens, Ohio

CONTACT: *David O. Thomas, director; (614) 593-1323*
DEGREES: *M.F.A., M.A., B.F.A.*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 50-60 (minor), 9 honors tutorial; grad: 45*
FACULTY: *8; 16:1 student/teacher ratio*
TUITION: *$3,000 (OH residents); $6,700 (out of state)*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Rajko Grlic, Ruth Bradley*
ALUMNI: *Tony Buba, Ed Lachman, Eran Preis, Steve Hank*

Unlike most film schools, which rely on undergraduate education for their bread and butter, Ohio University has only a graduate program. Housed at a major state university, the film school is characterized as a haven for independent film. It sponsors a prestigious film festival, hosts an annual scholarly conference, and publishes the highly respected journal *Wide Angle*.

David O. Thomas, Director of Film and Television, says, "We are known for independent film and for an international focus. Most people know us because our graduate program [turns out] college professors throughout the world. We hope to turn out individuals who can enter higher education as teachers." Nineteen years ago, Ohio's president mandated the university to adopt an international focus. This initiative has led to a graduate program where 20 percent are international students. The program publishes the *Asian Cinema Journal* and includes Jenny Lau and George Semsel, both leading figures in Asian cinema studies, on its faculty. Rajko Grlic, a Croatian emigré and director with an extensive list of credits in documentary and feature production, was recently hired as an Eminent Professor. He will soon begin shooting feature films with student crews.

Located in the small town of Athens, the program provides a comfortable environment for independent filmmakers. "One weakness of our program could be the locale," Thomas reflects. "We aren't able to bring in visiting artists daily, and filmmakers can get relaxed here with no cut-throat competition." However, the small student-teacher ratio and the program's strong ties to the music and theater departments sustains a creative, supportive atmosphere for student filmmaking.

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Bozeman, Montana

CONTACT: *Paul Monaco, chair, (406) 994-2484*
DEGREES: *B.A.*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 200-215*
FACULTY: *7 full-time; student/teacher ratio: 75:1 (first year theory), 18:1 (upper class)*
TUITION: *$5,000 (MT residents); $6,000 (out of state)*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Dennis Aig, Ronald Tobias, Dan Hart, Paul Monaco*
ALUMNI: *Ed Jones, Mark Vargo*

"Living in Montana gives you a lot of time and space to develop your own imagination," says Paul Monaco, chair of the Film Department at Montana State. "The nature of the place is collaborative: the environment is not



A view of Montana State's campus and big sky. Courtesy Montana State University

petitive; there is lots of access to faculty and not a lot of hassles in a rural mountain community like this."

The school is nestled in a valley surrounded by the Rocky Mountains. Montana State may not offer much contact with the film industry, but one of its defining characteristics is the fostering of close relationships between faculty and students. Students work on faculty projects and may consult teachers daily in informal ways. Between the public TV station KUSM, housed in the same facility, and the enormous amount of faculty production, students graduate with a lot of production experience under their belts.

The program's orientation is eclectic. "We encourage production of all sorts," Monaco says. "Experimental, documentary, story, animation. And we often integrate film with video, with projects originating on film but finished on video."

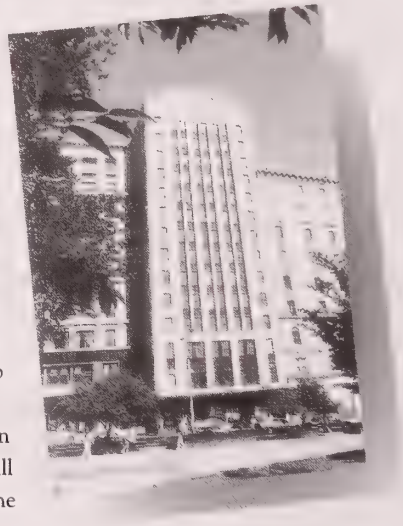
Production classes screen much independent work of the last decade. Cinematographer Andrew Laszlo has done specialty workshops with students, as have Peter Fonda and Bill Hjortsberg. Senior film projects cost around $1,500, far less than the amount spent at comparable film programs.

EMERSON COLLEGE

Boston, Massachusetts

CONTACT: *Don Fry, chair, (617) 578-8800*
DEGREES: *BFA, BA, BS, MA (video only)*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 350*
FACULTY: *6, plus visiting artists; student/teacher ratio: 20:1 (theory), 12:1 (prod.)*
TUITION: *$24,000*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Bridget Murname, Claire Andrade-Watkins, Patty Romeo, Jane Shattuc*
ALUMNI: *Spalding Gray, Vincent DiBona, Norman Lear*

The new Center for Communication & Technology at Emerson in Boston. Photo: Karen Couture, courtesy Emerson College



"We are known for two things," says Jane Shattuc, an assistant professor of film. "An intimate, hands-on environment for equipment,—students get to shoot films as sophomores, unlike [at] most film schools—and getting students jobs in the industry through our strong ties to Hollywood with our internship program in Los Angeles."

Perhaps one of the best known film programs situated at a small college, Emerson traverses the divide between commercial cinema and independent work in what many educators consider an exemplary manner. Located in the heart of Boston, Emerson emphasizes narrative and avant-garde filmmaking; the program will soon expand into documentary.

An active visiting artist program has had such filmmakers as Frederick Wiseman, Barbara Kopple, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Ross McElwee screen at Emerson. Hollywood producer and Emerson alumnus Arnon Milchan has also conducted workshops. The lively professional and independent film scenes in Boston infuse the program with energy and contacts.

The degree program in cinema is designed to give students a thorough grounding in the language, history, and politics of cinema. A reputable M.A. program in critical studies regularly places students in the prestigious Ph.D. programs.

Courses screen 70 to 80 percent independent work. Shattuc says, "That's where all the creative activity and energy is going on. [Students] have Hollywood as a background; we introduce them to the cutting edge."

Production students at Emerson may work in teams or produce and direct their own projects. Team projects entail each member contributing $500 to a production bank account. BFA final projects for seniors end up costing between $5,000 and $10,000, comparable to other major film schools.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

Iowa City, Iowa

CONTACT: *John Lyne, (319) 335-0575*
DEGREES: *B.A., M.A., Ph.D., M.F.A.*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 220, grad: 12*
FACULTY: *6; student/teacher ratio: 12:1 (w/ TA's)*
TUITION: *undergrad: $1145/semester (IO residents), $4,074 (out of state); grad: $1,360 (IO residents), $4,246 (out of state)*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Franklin Miller, Leighton Pierce, J. Dudley Andrew, Lauren Rabinowitz*
ALUMNI: *Mark Johnson, Tom Ackerman, Bob Seaman, Bob Watzke, David Payne, Charles Guggenheim*

University of Iowa's film program is legendary for its attention to critical theory and its small size, with only 20 undergraduates and about 10 graduate students in production.



For the newly approved MFA, four students are selected out of 80 applicants. Frequently those with no previous experience in film are admitted. "We are looking for interesting and motivated people with something to say," explains Franklin Miller, a visionary professor of film who spearheaded the newly minted degree.

The Becker Communication Studies Building at the University of Iowa. Courtesy University of Iowa

Housed inside the communication studies department, this A film and video program offers an exhilarating mix of critical thinking and intimate production experience. The

department sponsors critical colloquia attended by both theorists and filmmakers. Unlike many other film programs identified by genre, UI can't be typecast; it provides students with relative freedom to cruise through various genres, technical formats, and ideas. "We don't tell students what to do or take as courses," Miller says. "We help the student get to where the student is going. We reject the master/apprentice relationship; that is the wrong message."

UI has an explicit commitment to fostering independent cinema. "We don't bring in big time Hollywood directors. We think you should learn how to work outside the studio system," Miller says. "Independent, low-budget production is the future and the hope of film." UI hosts a variety of touring independent film festivals like Black Maria, Women in the Director's Chair, and the Bucks County Film Festival. Filmmakers Cathy Cook and Barbara Hammer have taught in the program as visiting artists.

With a state-of-the-art facility, student filmmakers enjoy unusual access to equipment. And, because Iowa City is so removed from the major centers of film production, the program had to build its own production center.

Border crossings between film and video are promoted. "You learn the craft of filmmaking from touching it, making splices, feeling the sprockets," explains Miller. "Using digital nonlinear editing vaults the discussion into exploring the potential of the footage—it is a huge pedagogical advantage. It takes the drudgery out."

Senior student films average about 10 minutes and cost approximately $1,500. Production faculty advocate conceptual clarity in films rather than length.

"Since we are in the middle of nowhere, there is nothing else to do but to make movies," observes Miller.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN/MILWAUKEE

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

CONTACT: *Richard Blau, chair, (414) 229-6015*
DEGREES: *BFA, MFA*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 100, grad: 10 (12 limit)*
FACULTY: *8; student/teacher ratio: 20:1 (basic), 5-15:1 (upper level)*
TUITION: *undergrad: $1,273 (WI resident); $4,075 (out of state); graduate: $1,764 (WI resident), $5,299 (out of state)*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Cecelia Condit, Portia Cobb, Diane Kitchen, Rob Danielson*
ALUMNI: *Cathy Cook, Chris Bratton*

Wisconsin evokes cheddar cheese rather than film. But the film program at UWM is quickly emerging as one of the most innovative media programs in the country. "We are still young—we are tending the garden, so to speak," explains program director Dick Blau.

Combining a strong avant-garde presence with documentary, the program considers itself "part of a movement of independent media," Blau says. "We are fairly heterodox in what we like—and we try to be generous."

Unique among film schools, UWM has been building an archive of independent film, with an explicit focus on American and European work. Because the school is off the route of most filmmakers and festival tours, it brings in about 10 visiting filmmakers per year. The program also sponsors a community media project where faculty and students work with Milwaukee's inner city populations on media projects.

Entry to the MFA program is extremely competitive. Only 12 graduate students are enrolled at any one time. Blau characterizes the graduate program as having "a lot of lively people, a healthy, energetic, non-jaded population."

The graduate and undergraduate programs encourage the mixture of critical studies with production—a happy and productive liaison given the international reputation of the Center for Twentieth Century Studies, a leading program in contemporary cultural studies at UMW.

"There is a good facility—we are basically self-sufficient in order to survive," Blau says. "We have our own lab which processes a quarter-million feet of film a year and can do optical prints. We have our own mixing studio. You can spend much less on your film education here than at an industry school. You can make media here."

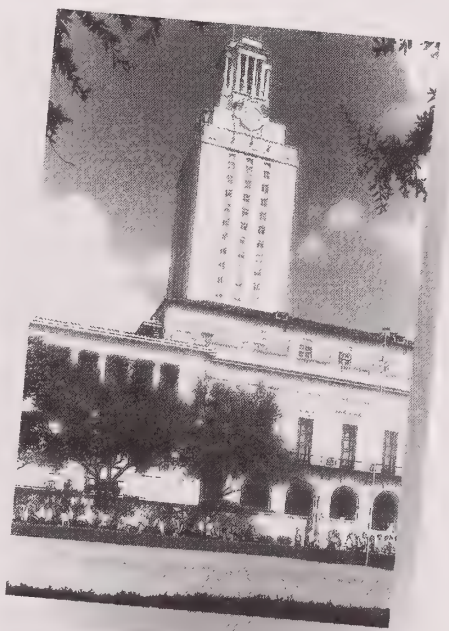
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS/AUSTIN

Austin, Texas

CONTACT: *John Downing, chair; (512) 471-4071*
DEGREES: *B.S., M.F.A., M.A., Ph.D.*
ENROLLMENT: *undergrad: 100; grad: 10-12*
FACULTY: *23 full-time; 15:1 student/teacher ratio*
TUITION: *undergrad $713/semester, grad $798/sem. (TX residents); undergrad. $2,345/sem., grad. $1,968/sem. (out of state)*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes Robert Foshko, Nicholas Cominos, Nancy Schiesari, Allucquere Roseanne Stone, Janet Staiger*
ALUMNI: *Michael Zinberg, Jordan Levin, Wayne Lemon, Bernard Lechowizk, Bob Levy, Ty King, Robert Rodriguez*

An outpost of liberalism in a somewhat conservative state, Austin is synonymous with a vibrant popular music scene. But UTA's program in Radio, Television, and Film, based in the College of Communications, has materialized as a leader in rethinking the organization of media education.

Department chair John Downing explains: "We bring together things that are kept apart in other programs: theory and production, humanities research with social science work, gender issues, communications technology and policy, ethnic/ minority studies, critical and cultural studies, and international communications."



The campus's main building and tower at the University of Texas at Austin. Photo: Larry Murphy, courtesy University of Texas at Austin

The competitive MFA program (only one student is admitted per 20 applicants) is comprised of 25 percent critical studies courses. Both film and video are taught. The average cost of a MFA thesis film ranges from $7,000 to $10,000, while a senior film averages $3,000. Graduate students come from all over the globe; the undergraduate program attracts mainly students from Texas and is divided between critical studies and production.

"We combine conceptual, humanistic, and artistic dimensions with the craft of film- and videomaking," Downing says. "People graduate from here

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who are well prepared and prepared to work hard; they don't come in with an attitude that they are God's gift to filmmaking."

In addition to its impressive reputation in media research, the program is strong on equipment, with six production studios. With two instructors teaching international cinema and various language departments across campus teaching national cinema courses, there is "lots of scope for non-Hollywood models of filmmaking," Downing says. However, budget problems at the university have severely limited the number of visiting artists.

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

Dayton, Ohio

CONTACT: *Chuck Derry, (513) 873-3072*
DEGREES: *B.F.A., B.A.*
ENROLLMENT: *95*
FACULTY: *5; student/teacher ratio 19:1 (frosh), 11-1 (soph.-senior)*
TUITION: *$3,000*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes James Klein, Julia Reichert, Russ Johnson, Chuck Derry, Bill Lafferty*

"We are not known at all," exclaims Jim Klein, associate professor at WSU's film department. "But we offer top notch professional skills and training in film production for a mostly working class, Midwest population whose voices have been marginalized by mainstream media. And we do it at a public institution for a lot less money than the big film schools."

WSU's program is solely undergraduate. Most students are from Ohio, and nine out of 10 work 20-30 hours a week. Narrative film is popular, but at least one third of the students choose documentary production.

"We try to teach our students to speak to a larger audience. We start with meek people who have extremely important things to say about life in America," Klein says. Polished and heartfelt student films from WSU chronicle what the department calls "Midwestern angst," generated by the devastation of the Reagan/Bush years. These films have received wide acclaim at U.S. and international film festivals.

Emphasizing the integration of theory and production, students must take 11 critical studies and history courses and 11 production courses. Only about 20 percent of those who begin this highly rigorous and competitive program graduate as film majors. With an exceptionally small class size (12) for upper level production, courses are very intimate.

WSU boasts a focused, step-by-step program to acquire professional skills, beginning with super 8 and moving onto 16mm. For final projects, students often work one-on-one with faculty. Senior films cost between $7,000-$10,000. Students often take five or six years to finish their degrees, sometimes spending the last two years working on their senior films.

The Dayton community is growing rapidly as a center of regional production grants, stimulated in part by WSU alumni who remain in the area. Because Ohio has endured hard economic times, a tight budget limits the number of visiting filmmakers to six or seven a year. However, the program has a passionate commitment to independent film. "It's the main thing we show in all of our classes," notes Klein.

ITHACA COLLEGE

Ithaca, New York

CONTACT: *R. William Rawley, (607) 274-3242*
DEGREES: *B.S., B.F.A.*
ENROLLMENT: *130 in B.S., 150 in B.F.A.*
FACULTY: *7, exclusively film; student/teacher ratio: 15:1 (production), 20:1 (theory)*
TUITION: *$14,000*
PROMINENT FACULTY *includes John Hess, R. William Rowley, Cynthia Baughman, Marcelle Pecot*
ALUMNI: *Michael Nathanson, Daniel Heffner, Jonathan Heap, Mark Romanek, Judy Marks, Rupert Thompson*

Situated in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, Ithaca was the location of *The Perils of Pauline* silent films in the early days of cinema. Now it boasts more movie theaters per capita



The communications building at Ithaca College in upstate New York.

than any other city in America.

The Department of Cinema and Photography at Ithaca College attracts students mainly from the Northeast. The program secures many advantages from its location within the School of Communications: a five-year-old, $12 million state-of-the-art facility; Los Angeles and London campuses; internship opportunities all over North America and Europe; and a full range of co-curricular opportunities—a television station, three radio stations, a newspaper, and a professional film and video unit.

The program is renowned for its rigorous 16mm-only production sequence, which advances students toward increasing technical complexity. The program has its own lab and sound mixing studio, with a crew of technicians to repair and run equipment. Senior film projects average between $2,000-4000, with a few projects running around $10,000.

Both degrees in cinema—B.S. and B.F.A.—require equal parts critical studies and production. "We insist on it," says chair Bill Rowley. "Production and theory are synergistic components of the study of cinema."

Although most students are interested in fiction filmmaking, Rowley says, "There is an extremely healthy group of documentary and experimental work, as well as work that crosses over genres."

As for independent filmmaking, Dean Thomas Bohn observes, "We are probably characterized by it, if you look at our faculty, who for the most part come out of experimental, documentary, and independent narrative production and theory." The film journal *Jump Cut* is edited at Ithaca by John Hess.

The department hosts numerous independent filmmakers, together with industry guests, with its Cross Currents, Distinguished Speakers in Communication, and Women Direct film series.

"As they begin their education, students have their eyes on mainstream commercial film," Rowley says, "but our job is to help them see indies as role models so they can express themselves and their ideas without having to compromise for purely economic reasons."

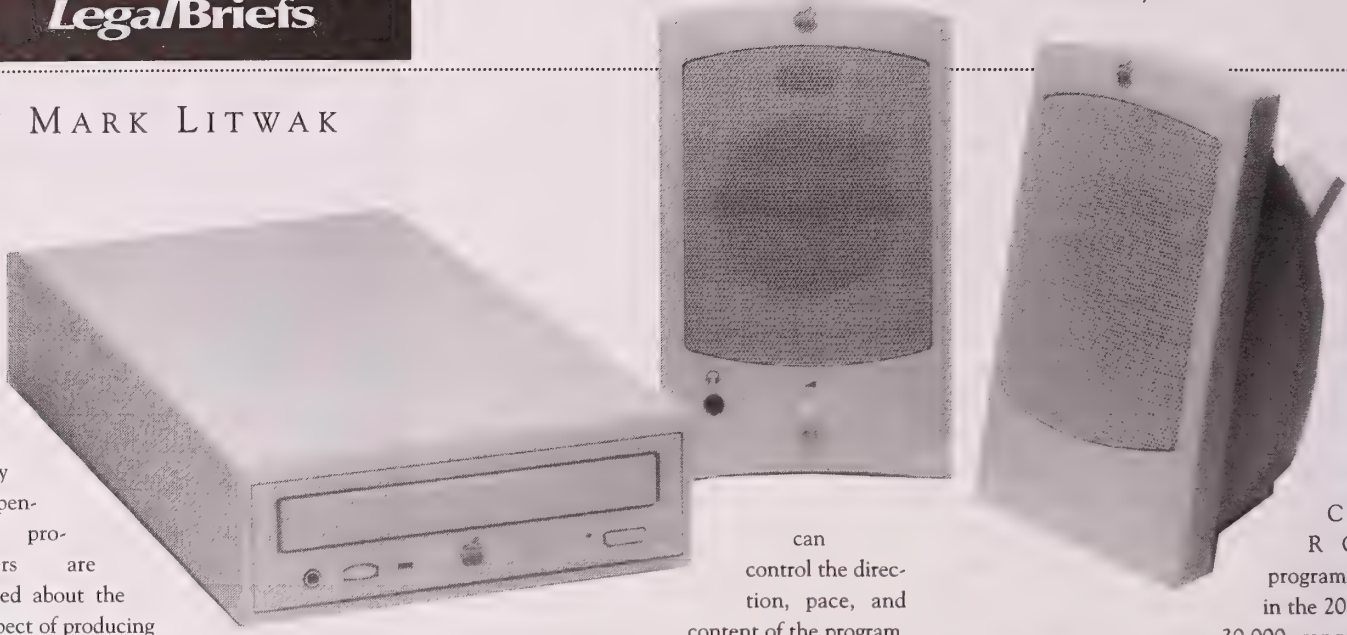
Patricia R. Zimmermann, an associate professor at Ithaca College, is the author of Reel Families: A Social History of the Discourse on Amateur Film, *forthcoming from Indiana University Press. Research assistance: William Hooper*



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BY MARK LITWAK



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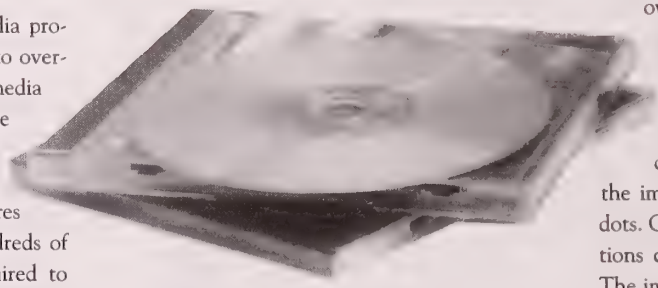
Many independent producers are excited about the prospect of producing multimedia programs. With a relatively modest investment in software, owners of personal computers can become desktop moguls. Distribution may become as simple as transmitting e-mail to a central depository.

This two-part article will explore some of the legal ramifications of producing multimedia programming. There are many legal hurdles to overcome in making even a simple multimedia piece. Moreover, the law has not kept pace with technology, and there are important issues that remain unresolved.

Since interactive programming requires more content than linear programs, hundreds of releases and/or permissions may be required to produce a single program. Determining and securing all the necessary releases and rights for a multimedia project can be a tiresome and complicated endeavor.

The multimedia producer wears several hats, blurring the traditional roles of writer, director, composer, editor, costume designer, and software developer. The legal issues cross several disciplines—publishing, telecommunications, computer, and entertainment law—and can become exceedingly knotty. They encompass intellectual property rights (copyright, patent, trademarks, titles), torts (right of privacy, right of publicity, defamation & unfair competition), and contract law.

Before delving into a discussion of the law, it is necessary to define the medium. Multimedia works are those based on multiple media sources, such as video, text, audio, photos, graphics, and animation. They are typically stored in digital form on magnetic or optical software. Some multimedia programs are interactive, meaning the user can control the direction, pace, and content of the program. Current programming is based on CD-ROM technology. CD-ROMs are compact, durable, have large storage capacity (600 megabytes of information), are inexpensive to manufacture, and transfer information quickly.



Obstacles to Licensing

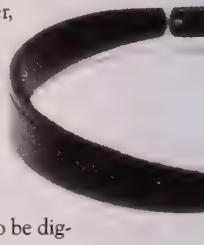
Many producers want to incorporate pre-existing work into their multimedia productions. This may involve putting a dictionary on a CD-ROM or producing a disk incorporating music by Mozart with accompanying text and photos. There are several problems one encounters when trying to license pre-existing works:

1) *Uncertain market:* Content owners still don't know what to charge to license material for multimedia. CBS is reportedly charging $15/second for material in its library. Many companies have adopted a wait-and-see attitude, afraid to sell rights at below market rates. Of course, if companies continue to stand on the sidelines, the market will develop slowly.

The amount of money a producer can afford to pay and recoup his or her investment is relatively small at this time because of the limited market for the end-product. Today only a few million computer users have CD-ROM players. Retail sales of CD-ROM programs are in the 20,000 - 30,000 range, although the market is expected to expand greatly.

2) *Clearance problems:* Owners may not hold all the necessary rights to their properties. Multimedia and electronic publishing did not exist when most contracts were negotiated, so the question of who owns such rights may be unclear. Moreover, old contracts may have been lost or may be difficult to locate.

3) *Fear of digitalization:* Some owners are concerned that if they let their work be digitized, it will be easily pirated. In digital, the image is converted into a series of pixels or dots. Once a work is digitized, subsequent generations can be copied without any loss in quality. The image can be manipulated and changed so it doesn't look like the original. Multiple images can be metamorphosed into new hybrids, a practice called "morphing." Moreover, ready access to computer networks and bulletin boards can compound the damage by making it easy and inexpensive to distribute pirated works to vast numbers of users.



Refusing to allow one's work to be digitized, however, does not necessarily prevent thievery. A determined pirate can steal an image by simply scanning it into a computer.

Assuming the owner of a work is willing to license it for multimedia use, a multitude of legal issues may arise. In this article, some of the issues regarding the licensing of text-based materials are reviewed. In the October 1994 issue of *The Independent*, this overview will continue with a look at the legal issues involved in licensing film, video, and television footage. The information

Multimedia producers —like film and videomakers—have a complex web of licensing requirements to sort through in the course of a production.

provided here is relevant to all producers, whether they work in film, video, or multimedia.

Copyright

Copyright law protects the work of authors, including literary and dramatic works. To incorporate such work in a multimedia program, a producer should:

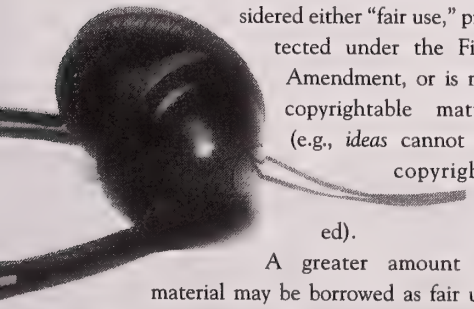
1) Determine whether the work is copyrighted or in the public domain. This can be difficult. A search of copyright records is rarely conclusive, as many works protected by copyright law may be unpublished and/or unregistered.

2) If the work is in the public domain, you may use it without permission of the author. Works in the public domain include those created by the United States Government, those by authors who have abandoned their copyright, and those with expired copyrights.

To determine whether a copyright has expired, you must refer to the law in effect when the material was published or created. Under pre-1978 copyright law, a copyright lasted 28 years and could be renewed for an additional 28-year period.* Some copyright owners renewed their copyrights, while others did not. Under the prior law, failure to put a copyright notice on a work could place the work in the public domain.

Once a work goes into the public domain, its copyright cannot be revived. However, some works in the public domain in the United States may be protected by copyright law in other countries. Determining copyright protection in foreign countries can be difficult, as most countries do not require registration or deposit of copyrighted works.

3) If the work is copyrighted, you need permission to use it unless your use is considered either "fair use," protected under the First Amendment, or is not copyrightable matter (e.g., *ideas* cannot be copyrighted).



A greater amount of material may be borrowed as fair use from nonfiction than fiction works. For example, a producer can borrow historical facts from a previous work without infringing upon the author's copyright.

4) If you need to license rights, make sure the licensor has the necessary rights to grant. This can

* When the law changed in 1976, those copyright owners with works in the second renewal period were given an extension of 19 years added to the second term, for a total copyright of 75 years. Current copyright law grants copyright for the lifetime of the author plus 50 years.

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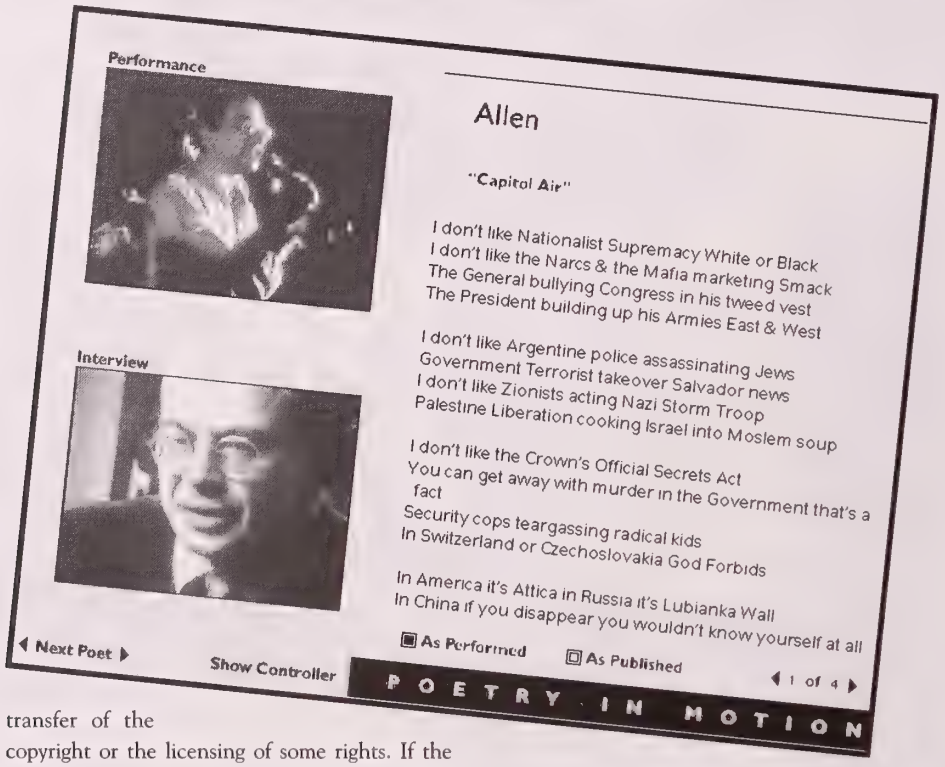
be hard to determine, since the copyright may be jointly held, interests may have been transferred to third parties, and ownership may be unclear when the work was created by one person for another (i.e., a work-for-hire). A book author, for example, may have granted movie rights to a studio. A screenwriter working as an employee probably doesn't own the copyrighted script she or he wrote; the studio will own it. A copyright search is advisable, as it may reveal a transfer of the copyright or the licensing of some rights. If the copyright report shows the purported owner of the literary property is not the copyright holder, or if the copyright has been sold to another, you will not want to proceed with the license from someone who is not the current copyright holder.

Private research companies can check additional sources of information for copyright, title, and trademark conflicts. These companies review catalogs and reference works listing publications, movies, sound recordings, and products.

However, reports supplied by the Copyright Office and private research companies do not offer a conclusion as to ownership of a copyright. They merely disclose whether a work has been registered and those transfers of rights that may have been recorded. The opinion of an experienced attorney is often desirable.

Obtaining rights to literary works can become even more complex if the works have incorporated other copyrightable material. For instance, a book may include photos duplicated with permission of the photographer. The book author probably doesn't own the copyright or any electronic rights to those photos and therefore cannot grant those rights to a multimedia producer. You would have to track down the photographer and request permission.

When text is taken from a script created by a Writer's Guild member for a studio, other issues may arise. While WGA members usually do not own the copyright to works-for-hire, they may have certain reserved rights, such as dramatic, publication, sequel, and merchandising rights (which are defined in the Writer's Guild Minimum Basic Agreement). This division of rights is called "Separation of Rights."



Titles

Titles are not copyrightable but can be protected under state and federal unfair-competition laws. The gist of an unfair-competition action is mislabeling or misdesignating a product (or service) in such a way as to cause consumers to be confused over its origin. Once a title comes to be associated in the public mind with the work of a particular producer, it acquires what is known as a "secondary meaning." For instance, moviegoers associate the words "Star Wars" with the work of George Lucas. Those who attempt to trade on this secondary meaning by adopting the same or a similar title may be liable for unfair competition and trademark infringement.

You should conduct a title search to determine if there are any conflicts with your intended title. If someone has used the title you want on a similar product or service offered in your geographical area, you should not use that title unless it has been abandoned or you have obtained a release.

When creating a title, a highly fanciful or original one is preferred because it is not likely to infringe on other titles. It will also be easier for you to protect the title.

Trademarks

One kind of unfair competition is trademark infringement. Merely mentioning a trade or service mark in a multimedia work is not an infringement, however, unless the mark is used to mislead the public as to the origin of manufacture. Thus a producer could use the word "Xerox" or "IBM" in a story without infringing those marks. However, if they were used to imply that a multimedia work was published by Xerox or IBM, the use would be actionable.

Characters

Characters, especially those represented in visual form (e.g., cartoon characters), can be protected under copyright law. Personality traits of a character, however, are not copyrightable.

The use of a character in a fictional work can be problematic if the character: 1) infringes on someone else's copyrighted character or 2) resembles an actual person, and the portrayal is defamatory or invades the person's privacy. These pitfalls can be avoided by licensing the use of fictional characters or obtaining a depiction release from living individuals. Another solution: change the name and description of the character so they are not identifiable with the original.

As a character's name, image, and dress can be considered trademarks, characters may also be protected under trademark and unfair competition laws. Conduct a character search to determine if there are any living or fictional characters with the same or similar names.



Some multimedia projects require that producers secure rights to preexisting text. Among Voyager's text-based projects are Art Spiegelman's Holocaust story, *Maus*, and its Poetry in Motion series, which grew out of a film series by Ron Mann. Courtesy Voyager

Tort Liability

If the material borrowed is defamatory or invades the rights of privacy or publicity, the borrower (as well as the original author) will be liable. When licensing rights, one should have the owner of the original material "warrant" (promise) that the work does not infringe any of these rights. You should also request an indemnification clause; this way, if the warranty is breached, you can obtain reimbursement for damages and attorney fees. Additional protection can be obtained by purchasing Errors and Omissions (E&O) Insurance.

Defamation

A defamatory statement is one that harms the reputation of another so as to lower him in the opinion of the community or to deter third persons from associating or dealing with him. For example, communications that expose a person to hatred, ridicule, or contempt, or reflect unfavorably upon one's personal morality or integrity are defamatory. One who is defamed may suffer embarrassment and humiliation, as well as economic losses such as loss of employment or the ability to earn a living.

The law of defamation can be very confusing, because common law* rules developed over centuries and are subject to constitutional limitations. One needs to read a state's defamation laws in light of various constitutional principles. For example, recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions have imposed significant limitations on the ability of government officials and public figures to win defamation actions. If a state's law is inconsistent with the Constitution, the law is invalid.

Sometimes a person can publish a defamatory remark with impunity, because protecting people's reputation is not the only value we cherish in a democratic society. When the right to protect one's reputation conflicts with a more important right, the defamed person may not be able to recover damages for the harm to his reputation.

The most important privilege (defense) from a producer's point of view, is truth. If your program hurts someone's reputation, but what you said was true, you are absolutely privileged. An absolute privilege cannot be lost through bad faith or abuse. So even if you maliciously defame another, you will be privileged.

Keep in mind that while truth is an absolute defense, the burden of proving truth will sometimes fall on the defendant. So if you make a defamatory statement, you should be prepared to prove its truth. And that may not be easy to do.

There is also a conditional common law defense of fair comment and criticism, which applies to communications about a newsworthy person or event. Conditional privileges may be lost through bad faith or abuse. This defense has been largely superseded, however, by a constitutional privilege for statements about public officials or public figures.

Public figures, such as celebrities or public officials, have a much higher burden to bear in order to prevail in a defamation action. There are two types of public figures. One is a person who has achieved such pervasive fame or notoriety that he or she is a public figure for all purposes. Other public figures have only been drawn into a particular public controversy and will only be considered public figures for a limited range of issues.

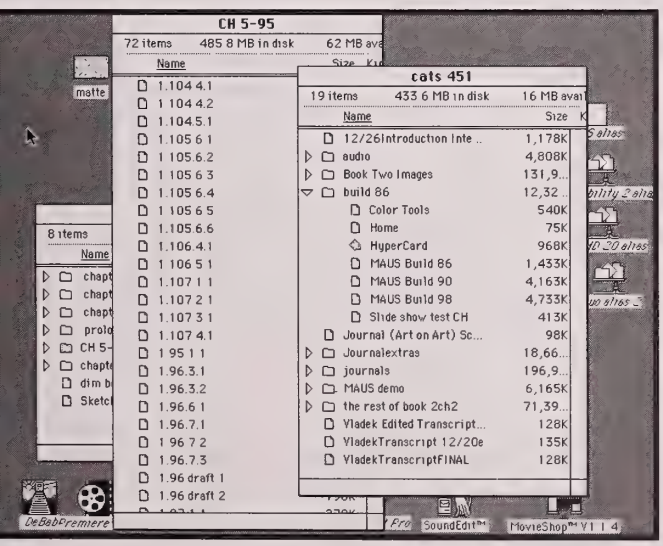
For a public figure or official to win a defamation case, they must prove the defendant acted with "actual malice." This term means the defendant intentionally defamed another or acted with reckless disregard for the truth. Plaintiffs find it difficult to prove actual malice, which is why so few celebrities bother suing the *National Enquirer*. To successfully defend itself, the *Enquirer* need only show it acted without malice. The newspaper can come into court and concede that its report was false, defamatory, and the result of sloppy and careless research. But unless the celebrity can prove that the tabloid acted recklessly, the court is obliged to dismiss the case.

The multimedia producer should take the following steps to protect against a defamation suit:

1) Be especially careful about portraying living individuals who are not public officials or figures.

2) Make sure you can prove any defamatory statements are true. Annotate your script with your information sources so you can

* Common law is the law of precedent that arises from cases decided by courts. Another type of law is statutory, or law that has been enacted by a legislative body, like Congress.



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document its truth and show you acted without actual malice.

3) Obtain releases whenever possible. It never hurts to have a release even if it is not legally required.

4) Have your attorney closely review your script for potential liability before production. If you can change the names and setting without detracting from the story's dramatic value, do so. You may be able to avoid liability for defamation this way. However, if a person depicted is identifiable from the circumstances, liability may result. Similarly, a disclaimer in the credits, such as "Any resemblance to people, living or dead, is purely coincidental...." will not protect you if viewers nevertheless believe the movie depicts an identifiable living person.

Right of Privacy

The right of privacy is the right to live one's life in seclusion, without being subjected to unwarranted and undesired publicity. In other words, it is the right to be left alone.

Like defamation, the right of privacy is subject to constitutional restrictions. Unlike defamation, a cause of action for invasion of privacy does not require any injury to one's reputation.

Many defenses to defamation also apply to invasion of privacy; truth, however, is not a valid defense. Express and implied consent are: If a person voluntarily reveals private facts to others, he or she cannot recover for invasion of privacy. Likewise, revealing matters of public record cannot be the basis for an invasion of privacy action.

Privacy actions typically fall into four factual patterns:

1) *Intrusion into one's private affairs.* This category includes such activities as wiretapping and unreasonable surveillance. The intrusion must be highly offensive. Most people, for instance, would find it offensive to discover a voyeur peering through their bedroom window. On the other hand, a salesman knocking on your front door at dinnertime may be obnoxious, but not offensive enough for legal action.

2) *Public disclosure of embarrassing private facts.* A person who publicizes a matter concerning the private life of another is subject to liability for invasion of privacy, if the matter a) would be highly offensive to a reasonable person, and b) is not of legitimate concern to the public. In other words, if it is not newsworthy.

3) *Appropriation of another's name or likeness.* Legal action in this area seeks to compensate plaintiffs for the emotional distress, embarrassment, and hurt feelings arising from the use of their name or likeness on a product. Suits over the invasion of one's right of publicity, in contrast, seek to compensate plaintiffs for the commercial value arising from the exploitation of their name

and likeness.

A person cannot always control the use of his name and likeness. While you can prevent someone from putting your face on their pancake mix, you cannot stop *Time* magazine from putting your picture on the cover. Again, using a name or likeness that's newsworthy would not be actionable.

4) *False light.* Publicity placing a plaintiff in a false light is actionable if the portrayal is highly offensive. This is similar to a defamation, but harm to reputation is not required. An example would be a political dirty trick, such as placing the name of a prominent Republican on a list of Democratic contributors. Although this person's reputation may not be harmed, he has been shown in a false light.

Right of Publicity

The right of publicity allows a person to control the use of his or her image, name, and likeness (including voice and signature) in a commercial setting. Again, you cannot put a picture of another person on your spaghetti sauce without permission. The right of publicity is typically exploited by celebrities who earn large fees from endorsing products.

To avoid liability, you should secure from every person appearing in a program a signed release giving you the right to use their name, voice, likeness, and identity in all media worldwide in perpetuity. You may also want the right to use the image in advertising and ancillary spin-off products.

Keep in mind that a person's identity may be infringed when their nickname or something closely associated with them is portrayed. Johnny Carson once sued a company marketing a toilet under the name "Here's Johnny!" The court held that the company has misappropriated Carson's identity by use of the phrase.

Union/Guild Permissions

If the writer is a member of the Writer's Guild of America (WGA), the multimedia producer may have to sign a union contract. The WGA, however, allows a production company to become a Guild signatory for one production only with minimal requirements.

Mark Litwak, an entertainment attorney and law professor in Santa Monica, is author of Reel Power: The Struggle for Influence and Success in the New Hollywood *and* Dealmaking in the Motion Picture and Television Industry. *This article is an excerpt from the upcoming* Litwak's Multimedia Producer's Handbook *(Silman-James Press).*

The second part of this article, which will appear in the October issue, covers the licensing of motion pictures, photographs, architecture, fine art, and computer software.

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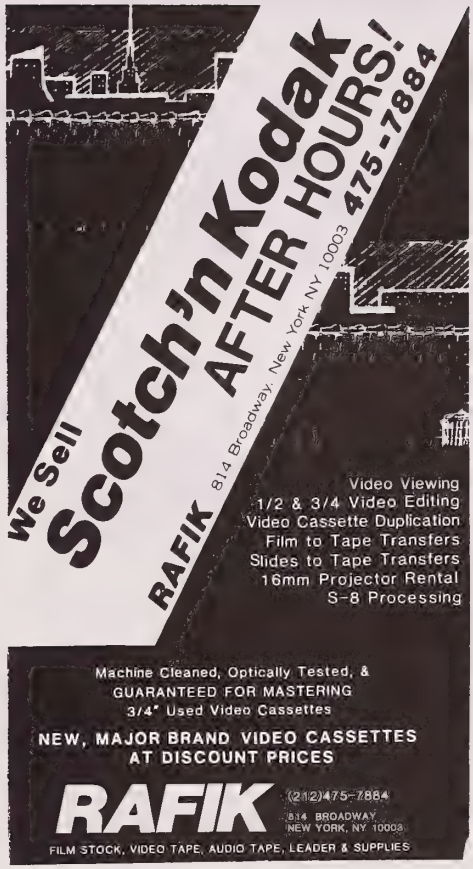
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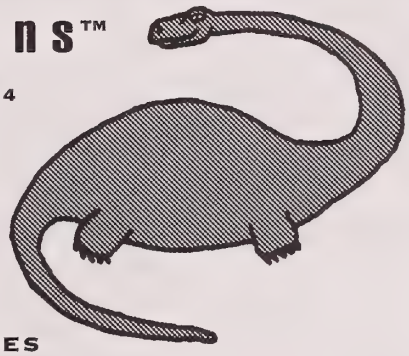
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By Mitch Albert

The mango tree cannot speak, but the children are eloquent. In producer Patricia Goudvis' new documentary, interviews with 10 Guatemalan and Salvadoran children on the cusp of adolescence reveal the hopes and fears of young life during wartime. **If the Mango Tree Could Speak** (58 min., video) is the latest fruit borne of Goudvis' 10 years in Central America as photojournalist and filmmaker. The film has won several awards, including a Certificate of Merit at this year's San Francisco International Film Festival. The film is available in English or Spanish. *If the Mango Tree Could Speak*, New Day Films, 22D Hollywood Ave., Hohokus, NJ 07423; (201) 652-6590; fax: (201) 652-1973.

Everything old is new again: filmmaker Robert Chafitz, who has worn various hats, from music video producer to production teacher, at the Moscow International Film School, has tackled his first major film project, **Flickers** (appr. 30 min., 16mm). Harking back to Chaplin-Keaton-Lloyd, Chafitz singlehandedly attempts to reinvigorate silent comedy with this film, the tale of a clumsy but affable movie projectionist named Eddie. Mistaken for a street person through a series of misunderstandings, Eddie is doted upon by a beautiful soup kitchen volunteer. To sustain her affections, he then keeps up the charade, leading to a number of rapid-succession mishaps and close calls. Soon, the circumstances become too strenuous, and Eddie must come clean... The film pays homage to a classic era—pratfalls, kisses, and chase sequences included—and brings a fresh new look to the genre as well. *Flickers*, Robert Chafitz, 12337 Legore Rd., Keymar, MD 21757; (410) 366-4346; fax: (301) 845-2112.

Greta Schiller, director of the award-winning docs *Before Stonewall* and *International Sweethearts of Rhythm*, has completed her latest works. **Woman of the Wolf** 28 min., 35mm), a film based on a 1904 story by American poet and author Renée Vivien. Two versions of the same narrative—the story of the Woman of the Wolf— are related, one by a man at a formal Victorian dinner party, and the other by the woman herself. Schiller is now in preproduction with **Paris Was a Woman** (60 min., 16mm), a portrait of the "legendary community of Modernist women who created new ways of working and living in Paris between the two World Wars." The film will employ "groundbreaking research, previously unpublished visual sources, and intimate storytelling" to examine that vibrant community of expatriate women writers and artists. *Woman of the Wolf* and *Paris Was a Woman*, Jezebel Productions, PO Box 1348, New York, NY 10011; tel./fax: (718) 478-2132.

"Country music," according to Brooklyn filmmaker Phil Hopper, "did not spring full-grown out of Jimmie Rodgers', Hank Williams', or anyone else's head. In **San Antonio Rose: The Life and Legacy of Bob Wills** (60 min., VHS), Hopper covers the life and times of the eponymous singing cowboy, who "learned frontier fiddle tunes at his daddy's knee, yet [rode] 50 miles on horseback to hear blues great Bessie Smith sing." The "color-blind" Wills helped invent Western Swing, a blend of European and African American musical traditions, during a time when American racism was at its most blatant. Hopper retraces Wills' story with a visit to his hometown of Turkey, Texas, and against the Legends of Western Swing Reunion festival in Canton, which features many of Wills' original Texas Playboys. *San Antonio Rose: The Life and Legacy of Bob Wills*, Original Cinema, 419 Park Ave. So., 20th fl., New York, NY 10016; (212) 545-0177; fax: 685-2625.

Writer-director Robert Rothbard bills **The Life and Times of Charlie Putz** (97 min., 35mm) as "The Little Movie That Could" on account of his success with a $40,000 budget. A Capraesque tale of a guy named Putz, the film depicts the main character's decline into homelessness and his eventual resurrection. Shot over 31 days with no investors and a crew working for expenses only, the film is an object lesson on independent resourcefulness. *The Life and Times of Charlie Putz*, Overnight Inspirations, (212) 869-4430.

Carnations, Ostriches, and Condos: The Hidden History of Ocean Park, California (27 min., video) makes for a good retort to the art critic who once scoffed, "I have no idea where Ocean Park is, or even if it exists at all." Directed by Beverly Jones and Anthea Raymond, this documentary fleshes out the past and present of an aging Southern California neighborhood. Ocean Park is known for, among other distinguishing traits, the Aragon Ballroom, the site of the old Lawrence Welk show, and that "failed Disneyland by the sea," Pacific Ocean Park. *Carnations, Ostriches, and Condos*, Anthea Raymond (212) 631-1029, (310) 399-1033.

A "metaphysical road comedy" set in the Arizona desert, featuring three companions and a motivational speaker on their way to meet the good Lord at a Bingo game: This is **Nine Hours to Yuma** (85 min., 16mm). Directed by Chris Vaaler, the film was shot on location in and around Scottsdale and Yuma. *Nine Hours to Yuma*; Chris and Sarah Vaaler (602) 451-3071.

A Franciscan monk from San Francisco, formerly editor of a poetry magazine, writes and directs a film about urban cannibalism. That's not a film pitch, that's a thumbnail bio of Glenn Davis, whose film is called **The Game** (95 min., 35mm). The film aims to combine thrills n' chills with "a strong social conscience examining the dark side of urban existence." Production began late June. *The Game*, Xedra Productions, P.O. Box 191025, Rincon Center, San Francisco, CA 94119; (415) 641-9950; fax: 641-7337.

The viewer of **The Book of Shadows** (25 min., VHS) is an invitee to a "landscape of dreams where music and image mate in an erotic ritual." Produced by Janis Mattox and featuring choreographer and performer Marci Javril, this multiple award-win-



Filmmaker Phil Hopper (right) with country singer Bob Wills in *San Antonia Rose*. Courtesy filmmaker

ning experimental video riffs on female archetypes using innovative lighting, dance, body painting, and music. Goddess, maiden, mother, crone, virgin, seductress, nurturer, and destroyer swirl about in this "video ballet." *The Book of Shadows*, Good Sound Foundation, 2995 Woodside Rd., #400, Woodside, CA 94062; (415) 851-2177; fax: 851-2183.

In the great Chicago Fire of 1995, the police and fire departments abandon the city to its own wits. Two competing bands of "fire brigades" remain behind to dart through the city in search of buildings that have escaped the flames. Once inside, they set about creating intricate dance accompaniments to music selected by their captains. The bands race against each other, vying for the city's fans. The *real* fires—that is, insane hoedowns—are lit when they happen to encounter each other at the same "safehouses". The turning point hinges on a scene set at the Chicago Board of Trade, where A&R reps from Japan's biggest label are set to sign one of the bands... This is **Duelin' Firemen**, from RUNANDGUN! Movin' Pictures, Inc. And it's not a film, either, in the online age sense of the word: it's a "CD ROM interactive, motion picture/video game for the 3DO Interactive Multiplayer system." Starring actress Nancye Ferguson and you, the player, with cameos by Timothy Leary and Devo's Mark Mothersbaugh, this, uh, *game* is a sui generis harbinger of the increasingly wacky possibilities awaiting image-producers of the now-future. Suzanna Bierwith, *Duelin' Firemen*, RUNANDGUN! Movin' Pictures, (312) 225-1211; fax: 225-5943.

"A live action comic strip for television" is filmmaker Rick Field's description of his recently completed short, **Duane and Ramon on the Edge of Space** (5 min., video). A giant chunk of pollution plummets down upon the Manatee Recycling Center, and five one-minute sequences mixing "Keatonesque physical comedy with ping-ponging one-liners and underpinnings of social satire" tell the rest. *Duane and Ramon on the Edge of Space*, Juicing Orange Productions, 423 Atlantic Ave., #2H, Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 237-4354.

Getting by, homeless, but in no way helpless, the characters in Charles Weinstein's **Under the Bridge** (100 min., 35mm) constitute a 'found' family. Kathy is a heroin-addicted prostitute who resides underneath the Williamsburg Bridge, in full view of the skyline of broken dreams, along with other homeless people. When she is forced by the others to look after the group's most recent addition—a young orphan runaway named Eddie—she reacts with hostility. Eventually, Eddie becomes her ticket to redemption. *Under the Bridge*, Bridge Pictures, Ltd., 155 Wythe Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211; tel./fax: (718) 387-2447.

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BY KATHRYN BOWSER

FESTIVAL LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. AS SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT FIVF WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.



DOMESTIC

AMERICAN INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL & VIDEO EXPOSITION, November 10-17, CA. In 19th yr. senior int'l competitive fest of films & videos by or about Native Americans in US & Canada; sponsored by American Indian Film Institute, founded to address negative stereotyping & recognize positive portrayals of Native Americans. Fest provides showcase for films that might not receive recognition in theatrical or nontheatrical release. Works must have been completed in 1993-1994. Cats: doc feature, doc short, commercial feature, docudrama, live short subject, animated short, industrial & music video. Awards: American Indian Motion Picture Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $50. Deadline: Sept. 9. Contact: Michael Smith, director, American Indian Film Fest & Video Expo, American Indian Film Institute, 333 Valencia St., ste. 322, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 554-0525; fax: 0542.

ASBURY-MANHATTAN FILM FESTIVAL, October, NY. Noncompetitive fest for ind. short films under 25 min.; each yr. w/ special theme (last yr's was Academy Award winning shorts from the past). All genres accepted. Held at NYC's Fashion Institute of Technology, fest combines screenings w/ live entertainment. Program incl. appearances by celebrity filmmakers. 1,000 people attend annually. Entry fee: $40. Deadline: Aug. 30. Contact: Doug LeClaire, fest director, Asbury-Manhattan Film Fest, 207 E. 37th St., ste. 5D, NY, NY 10016; (212) 687-1988.

AUSTIN GAY & LESBIAN INTERNA[illegible]IAL FILM FESTIVAL, October, TX. Film & videos by/about lesbians, gays & bisexuals of any length & genre accepted. Competitive Regional Showcase focuses on works by film/video makers living & working in AZ, NM, OK, TX, AR & CO. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Scott Dinger, Austin Gay & Lesbian Int'l Film Festival, PO Box K, Austin, TX 78713; (512) 472-3279; fax: 3240.

AUSTIN HEART OF FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-16, TX. Fest is devoted to writer & art, craft & business of screenwriting. Feature-length screenplay competition cats incl. mature themes & children/ family themes. Student competition incl. short scripts (under 30 min.) in any genre. Feature-length winners receive $2,000; student winners receive $500. Short films under 30 min. accepted for special screening. Fest programs incl. premieres, screenings, master classes, etc. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Austin Heart of Film Fest, 707 Rio Grande, ste. 101, Austin, TX 78701; fax: (512) 478-6205.

CINEQUEST V ANNUAL SAN JOSE FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 9-13, CA. Fest accepts submissions ind. feature & short films of "artistic, social, or stylistic merit," under theme of "Maverick Filmmaking." Will incl. numerous premiere screenings, seminars, tributes & unique Film Feasts (thematic events of film, food & entertainment). Fest has developed Maverick Grant Program, designed to aid ind. filmmakers w/ exhibition & distribution. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Ken Karn/Halfdan Hussie, Cinequest V, PO Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172-0040, (408) 995-6305; fax: 277-3862.

NEW YORK EMMY AWARDS, March, NY. This is 38th yr of annual TV awards. Programming must have had initial broadcast or cablecast in NY State or northern NJ betweeen Sept. 1, 1993 & Aug. 31, 1994. (Programming avail. to more than 50% of nat'l viewing audience during that time ineligible.) Individuals may enter w/out company or station affiliation. Awards go to producers & other skill areas; non-English programming eligible in original language format. Entries must incl. 2/3 original content. Over 60 entry cats, incl. multi-part news feature, investigative journalism, event coverage, off-camera achievement, editing, computer animation & graphics. Format: 3/4". Entry fees: $50 Academy Member's 1st entry ($99 membership fee); $150 all other entries; $15 additional names after 1st 4. Deadline: Aug. 2. Contact: Ron Burch, administrator, NY Emmy Awards, NY Chapter of NATAS, 1560 Broadway, NY, NY 10036; (212) 768-7050.

NEW YORK EXPO OF SHORT FILM & VIDEO, Nov. 11-12, NY. Fest accepts "new, cutting-edge" ind. shorts under 60 min., incl. narrative, doc, animation, experimental & music videos. Awards: 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place, Jury Awards, Eastman Kodak cash prize. Judges incl. Academy Award-winning directors, scholars & critics. Expo also screens selected films for NY area distributors & exhibitors & offers public seminar on exhibition & distribution of shorts. Canadian & int'l entries accepted. After several complaints last yr about unreturned prints & lack of responsiveness, fest is reorganized w/ new director & promises to rectify past problems. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $35. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Robert Withers, fest director, New York Expo, 532 LaGuardia Pl., Box 330, NY, NY 10012; (212) 505-7742 (voicemail).

SAN FRANCISCO ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Now in 13th yr, fest is largest film & video showcase dedicated to presenting works by Asian & Asian Pacific American makers, w/ over 125 films & videos from new & established makers shown. Fest seeks new film & video works of all genres, incl. features, shorts, doc, narrative, experimental & animation by &/or about Asian Pacific & Asian Pacific American people, cultures & experiences. Fest incl. retros, panels, presentations, audience awards, guest-curated programs. Sponsored by National Asian American Telecommunications Association, which supports Asian Pacific American artists working in film, video & radio through local film fests & screenings, nat'l public TV broadcasts & distribution to educational institutions, technical assistance, grants & fiscal sponsorships. $10 entry fee: Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Paul Mayeda Berges, fest director, NAATA, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 7428.

SECOND ANTI FILM FESTIVAL, November 18-20, FL. Fest seeks radical, avant-garde, experimental, subversive & fictional shorts (under 15 min.) to be screened in noncompetitive fest. Deadline: Oct. 21. Super 8, 16mm & VHS formats. Send $25 entry fee & VHS for appl. preview. Contact: Alliance Film Video Co-op, 924 Lincoln Rd., ste. 214, Miami Beach, FL 33139; (305) 538-8242.

SHORT ATTENTION SPAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, September, CA. Entries no longer than 2 min. accepted. Work can originate on any format,.Only VHS dubs accepted for preview. Videos accepted in noncommercial cats: narrative, experimental, animation. Screenings at ATA Gallery; selected entries cablecast on ATA's weekly show. Entry fee: $5. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Beth Hall, Short Attention Span Film & Video Fest, 144 Chattanooga St., San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 824-3890.

VIDEO TUSCULUM, Nov. 11-12, TN. New 2-day nat'l fest seeks videos produced on consumer (VHS, VHS-C, SVHS, Hi8) equipment. Workshops & fest aimed at students & ind. producers. Send entries between Sept. 1 & Oct. 1. Contact: Wess duBrisk, PO Box 5638, Greeneville, TN 37743; (615) 636-7300 ext. 340; fax: 638-7166.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, IL. Fest, in 14th yr., accepts submissions from women directors in all genres & lengths. WIDC exhibits & promotes films/videos by women that reflect diversity of cultures, experiences & styles. 1 of few women's fests in US, it receives 300 entries annually & screens about 70. Cats: narrative, doc, computer graphic, experimental & animation. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Entry fee: $15 WIDC members/students; $25 others. Deadline: Oct. 14. Contact: WIDC, 3435 N. Sheffield, #202, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-4988; fax: 4999.

FOREIGN

AMIENS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL & MARKET, November, France. In 14th yr, competitive fest began in seventies as Amiens Film Days Against Racism & For Friendship Among Peoples. It continues tradition w/ focus on films exploring cultural identity, minority groups & ethnic issues, w/ particular emphasis on little known cinemas & int'l multicultural film prods. Feature-length, short fiction, or doc films that address identity of people or ethnic minority, racism or issues of representation &

differences eligible. Audiences of 30,000 view 20 films in competition as well as special programs, incl. retros, panoramas & tributes to cinema of Africa, Caribbean, Latin America, Native Americans. Awards: Grand Prize, Special Jury Prize, acting awards. Fest incl. market & screens over 150 films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline; Sept. 16. Contact: Jean-Pierre Garcia, Festival Int'l du Film d'Amiens, Association pour les Journées Cinématographiques d'Amiens, 36 rue de Noyan, 8000 Amiens, France; tel: 22 91 01 44; fax: 22 92 51 82.

FANTASPORTO, Feb. 3-11, Portugal. In 15th edition, FIAPF accredited fest has 250 screenings, w/ 8 screens & 2,000 seats. Official Competitive Section is open to films, shorts & features shot in 35mm, which have as main subjects worlds of science fiction, imagination & fantasy. Retro will be dedicated to Canadian cinema. Fest also hosts 5th New Directors Week, open to filmmakers w/ up to 2 feature films completed. Section also provides screening space to directors whose work is not dedicated to main theme of fantasy films & whose work has never been commercially released in Portugal. Formats: 35mm, 16mm (outside of official competition). Contact: Fantasporto, Cinema Novo Multimedia Centre, Rua da Constituicão, 311, 4200 Porto, Portugal; tel: 351 2 5508990; fax: 351 2 5508210.

CLERMONT-FERRAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, February, France. FIVF will work with int'l competitive showcase of short films this yr, collecting entries for preview by fest reps & shipping selected films to France. Fest grew out of a dedicated group of film enthusiasts; still operates as a collective & has grown to be one of the premiere mainstays of the int'l short film fest circuit. It is devoted to short films of all genres, offering int'l competition w/ over 40 countries represented), nat'l competition & additional special programs, which in past have incl comprehensive retros of American ind. short cinema. Over 230 mainly fiction but also animation, doc & experimental short films offered to lpublic, which annually exceeds 75,000. Jury & public prizes reward best in various cats. Fest among largest in France. Open access market provides meeting place for producers, directors, TV buyers & short film programmers; about 1,000 professionals check out offering of over 1,500 titles, & fest market catalog is reliable & extensive overview of int'l short film production each yr. Fest entries must be less than 40 min. & compoleted after Jan. 1, 1993. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. For information & appl, send SASE to: FIVF/Clermont Ferrand Festival Selection, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400; fax: (212) 677-8732. Entry fee: $25 AIVF members, $30 nonmembers, payable to FIVF. Preview on cassette only. Deadline: Sept. 15. In France: Roger Gonin, Festival du Court Mettrage de Clermont-Ferrand, 26, rue des Jacobins, 63000 Clermont-Ferrand, France; tel: 33 73 91 65 73; fax: 33 73 92 11 93.

FIRST NATIONS OF ABYA-YALA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Dec. 7-20, Quito, Ecuador. This indigenous-organized festival has two parts: from Dec. 7-15, selected entries will be screened w/ mobile projection units in 16 indigenous communities

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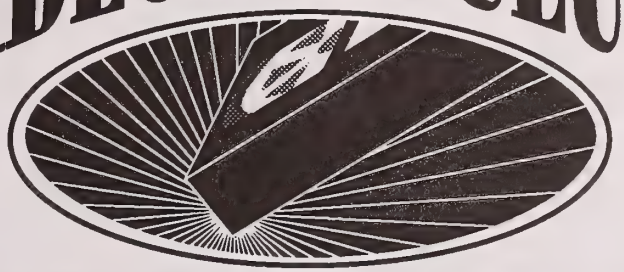
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throughout Ecuador; film/videomakers will be invited to accompany their work. From Dec. 15-20 all accepted entries will be screened in Quito; there will be awards ceremonies, panels & roundtable discussions. Fest committee seeks work by or about indigenous people of Americas. Work completed in or after 1990 will be considered, but all formats, genres, and lengths are acceptable. Please send entries in 1/2" or 3/4" NTSC video. Submissions must be accompanied by official submission form, avail. from the festival office in Quito or US contact. Non-Spanish language work must include written transcription or summary in Spanish. Deadline: Oct. 31. Festival office: Alberto Muenala, CONAIE, Av. Los Granados 2553 y 6 de Diciembre, Casilla 17-17-1235, Quito, Ecuador; tel.: 593-2-248-930; fax: 593-2-442-271. US contact: Erica C. Wortham, National Museum of the American Indian, George Gustav Heye Center, Old Customs House, One Bowling Green, NY, NY 10004; (212) 283-2420; fax: (212) 694-1970.

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL MANNHEIM-HEIDELBERG, October 15-22, Germany. Now in its 43rd yr, Mannheim-Heidelberg is one of Germany's oldest competitive film fests. Competition incl. ind. dramatic & doc feature-length films & short films. Awards: Grand Prize (DM 30,000 & DM 20,000 support for German distributor); Special Prize in memoriam Rainer Werner Fassbinder (DM 10,000); Short Film Prize (DM 2000), Doc Prize of South German Broadcasting Company (DM10,000 & purchase of broadcasting rights); FIPRESCI Prize; Interfilm Prize; Prize of the Jury of Catholic Film Work & Audience Prize. Films shown publicly in German cinemas or screened on German TV prior to fest or have participated in official progam of major European fest ineligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline: Aug. 8. Contact: Dr. Michael Koetz, Internationales Filmfestival Mannheim-Heidelberg, Collini-Center Galerie, D-68161 Mannheim, Germany; tel: 49 621 102943; fax; 49 621 291564.

ROME-FLORENCE FILM FESTIVAL, Dec. 7-12, Italy. Event specializes in premiering American ind. film. Noncompetitive showcase respresents spectrum of prods. created each yr. Looking for feature-length films. Deadline: Oct. 15. Send inquiries or VHS copy of film to: Rome-Florence Film Festival, Italian Cultural Institute, 686 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021, attn: Eugenia Fiumi; tel/fax: (212) 744-2278.

ERRATA

The dates for **The Montreal International Festival of New Film & Video** that appeared in the June 1994 issue of *The Independent* were incorrect. The festival was held in June rather than October. The festival dates for 1995 are June 8 to 18. The deadline for entries is April 21, 1995. Contact: Claude Chamberlan, Festival International du Nouveau Cinema & de la Vidéo de Montréal, 3726, Blvd. St. -Laurent, Montreal, Québec, Canada H2X2V8; tel: (514) 843-4725; fax: (514) 843-4631.

Our April listing for the Central Florida Film & Video Festival omitted the deadline for entries, which is August 15.

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AQUARIUS PRODUCTIONS, INC. seeks videos on learning disabilities, special ed., holistic medicine & coping w/ chronic diseases, among other topics. Call/send videos for preview. Contact: Leslie Kussman, Aquarius, 35 Main St., Wayland, MA 01778; (508) 651-2963.

ATA TRADING CORP., actively & successfully distributing ind. prods. for over 50 yrs., seeks new programming of all types for worldwide distribution into all markets. Contact us at (212) 594-6460.

CINNAMON PRODUCTIONS, INC., 24 yrs. distributing ind. prods to educ., home video & TV worldwide, seeks new films & videos on social/minority concerns, human rights, environment, AIDS, Native Americans, drugs. 19 Wild Rose Rd., Westport, CT 06880; (203) 221-0613.

ECLECTIC ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY, worldwide distribution for cutting-edge art house or mainstream feature films. Send tapes to: 8033 Sunset Blvd., ste. 474, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 466-0801; 5980 (fax).

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health-care markets. Fanlight prods distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

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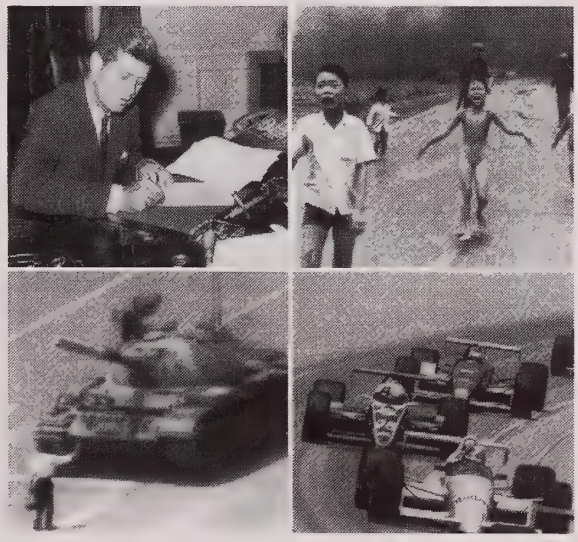
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HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

INTERNATIONAL FILM FINANCING CONFERENCE, presented by EBS Productions & Film Arts Foundation, 3-day event linking U.S. ind. filmmakers searching for financing w/ int'l buyers & producers interested in U.S. coprod. Incl. roundtables, private meetings & receptions limited to 60 participants; panel discussion open to public. Deadline: Nov. 4. Send appls, to: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

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21ST CENTURY, live, interactive variety show on WMFP Boston, seeks videotapes of 5 min. or less that interact w/ show's text. For info, contact: Richard Washbourne (415) 587-2296 or (415) 241-0664.

47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, resumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

ALIVE TV is accepting submissions of new experimental films, performance pieces, animation, narrative, shorts & essay works unique in content or style. Preference placed on work under 1/2 hr. *Alive TV* tries to be wake-up call to mainstream media (& PBS). Please watch program on local PBS station & only submit work that seems in sync w/ our goals. Help us survive as 1 of last nonmainstream programs on network TV. Send work on 1/2" or 3/4" w/ filmmaker's bio & film bio (awards, distributors, etc.) to: Neil Sieling, exec. producer, *Alive TV*, KTCA, 172 E. 4th St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE seeks short films for monthly program at Directors Guild Theater in L.A. Send VHS copy of narrative, doc, experimental or animated (10 min. max) to: Dennis Bartok, programming manager, American Cinematheque, 1717 Highland Ave., ste. 814, Hollywood, CA 90028.

ART IN GENERAL seeks work in all visual media for exhibitions/installations for 1994-95 season. Submit resumé, entry form & SASE. For more info, contact: Art in General, 79 Walker St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION, seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, at (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o *Screen* Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play between alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS accepts features, shorts, animated, experimental, or docs of exceptional quality for Cinematheque program. Student works not accepted. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Ron Beattie, Center for Contemporary Arts, 291 E. Barcelona Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE, 1/2-hour, monthly news & public affairs program, shown on public-access stations across country, is looking for footage or produced pieces (1-30 min.) on Central America, Cuba & Haiti (esp. Haiti, Salvadoran elections, return of Guatamalan refugees from Mexico). Also looking for someone in D.C. to tape interviews for show. Can't pay, but can cover costs of tape & mailing. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COLLECTING COLLECTORS, video screening series celebrating people w/ passion for collecting, seeks everything from unedited tapes to feature films. Send VHS tape w/ SASE & description to: Danny Leonard, media arts coordinator, Center for Creative Work, 425 Bush St., ste. 425, San Francisco, CA 94108; (510) 527-4814.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENTS seeks film & video shorts (under 20 min.) in all genres, formats for D.C. "ind. showcase" program. Possible deferred payment. Send VHS or 3/4" copy (returnable w/ SASE) to: 1812 Ingleside Terrace N.W., ste #5, Washington D.C. 20010; (202) 232-5934.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn

Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

THE EDGE, Denver-based media collective, seeks films & videos on alternative approaches, feminist stories, ethnically & sexually diverse works for monthly screenings. All genres considered. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4" & 1/2". Submit VHS for preview only. Send to: Lisa Bilodeau, 804 West 4th Ave. #3, Denver, CO 80223.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FEEDBACK, anthology cable-access program of ind. work, is accepting work on 3/4", 1/2" or Hi-8. Send tape & SASE to: N.A.M.E. Gallery, Attn. Video Commitee, 700 North Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

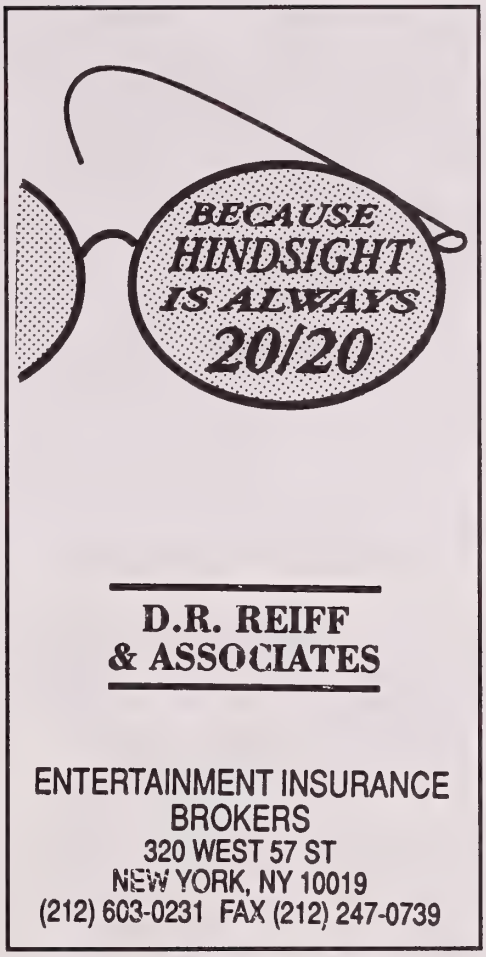
FEM TV (Feminist TV), award-winning cable-access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred. No nudity.) Videos credited. Tapes returned. Mail to: Fem TV, PO Box 66604, Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FIFTEEN MINUTES, Wash. D.C. nightclub, seeks videos & films for screening & performance events. Fees to artists. Accepts 16mm, VHS, S-VHS & Hi-8. Also looking for ambient video. FFI: Eric Gravley, 15 Minutes, 1030 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 677-5643.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, ste. 4768, NY, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks comedy shorts (under 10 min.)







in all comedy styles/genres to air on LA cable access. Future distribution package may provide possible deferred pay. Send submissions (3/4" preferred) & SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods., 572 1/2 S. Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on the aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Mary Yalanjian, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI, 53201; (414) 229-6971.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

JAPANESE TV PROD. CO. seeks materials relating to Japanese-Americans before, during & after Pacific War. Prod. aimed for broadcast next yr., which marks half-century since Japanese surrender. Seek data & descriptions on titles—film, video, home movies—concerning Japanese-Americans in contiguous 48 states, Hawaii, Alaska & US possessions; also Canada. Send materials & info (w/ footage prices if known) to: Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., Apt. 3W, NY, NY 10024-3914; (212) 877-6856.

JERUSALEM INDEPENDENT TELEVISION (JITV) seeks ind. film & video from around the world in any language. Incl. English translated storyboard w/ VHS copies, treatment, description, press kit, standard release form, posters, photo of maker and $19 entry fee (payable to JITV) to: Vlad M. Mogilevsky, senior VP, JITV, PO Box 39596, Ramat Aviv 61390, Israel.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

NATIONAL BLACK PROGRAMMING CONSORTIUM accepting entries for 14th annual Prized Places Int'l Film & Video Competition. Cats incl. comedy, content shorts, experimental, news, drama, doc, public affairs, youth & music video. Special cats incl. Best Black Ind. Producer, Best Student Film/Videomaker, Emerging Artist & Oscar Micheaux Award. Submissions must be about experiences of Africans or people of African descent. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: NBPC (614) 299-5355.

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. We are committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

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NEW DAY FILMS, ind. media producers working w/ common vision, seeks energetic new members w/ challenging social issue docs for distribution to nontheatrical markets. Deadline: Sept 1. Call (415) 332-2577.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, invitational fest in 5th yr. at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding reference file of dedicated S-8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length in S-8, who have prints (not just originals). Fest has travelled to Brussels & may reach Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Paris, etc., in 1994. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 w/ file folder of support materials. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

OPEN WIDE, weekly, half-hour TV series produced by CBC Manitoba that profiles best of alternative, underground & ind. cinema from Canada, US & world, seeks submissions. Looking for experimental, video art, comedy, drama, animation, docs & music videos between 30 sec. & 20 min. Submissions on 16mm, VHS, Hi-8, 3/4", 1/2" or video. Film/video associations & distribs. should send catalogs w/ submissions. License fee paid if selected for broadcast. Submissions may be in any language from any time. Will acknowledge submission w/in 10 days. Send to: *Open Wide*, CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2G1, Attn: Shipping Dept.; (204) 788-3111, Gavin Rich, producer.

ORGONE CINEMA, nonfunded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatamala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste.

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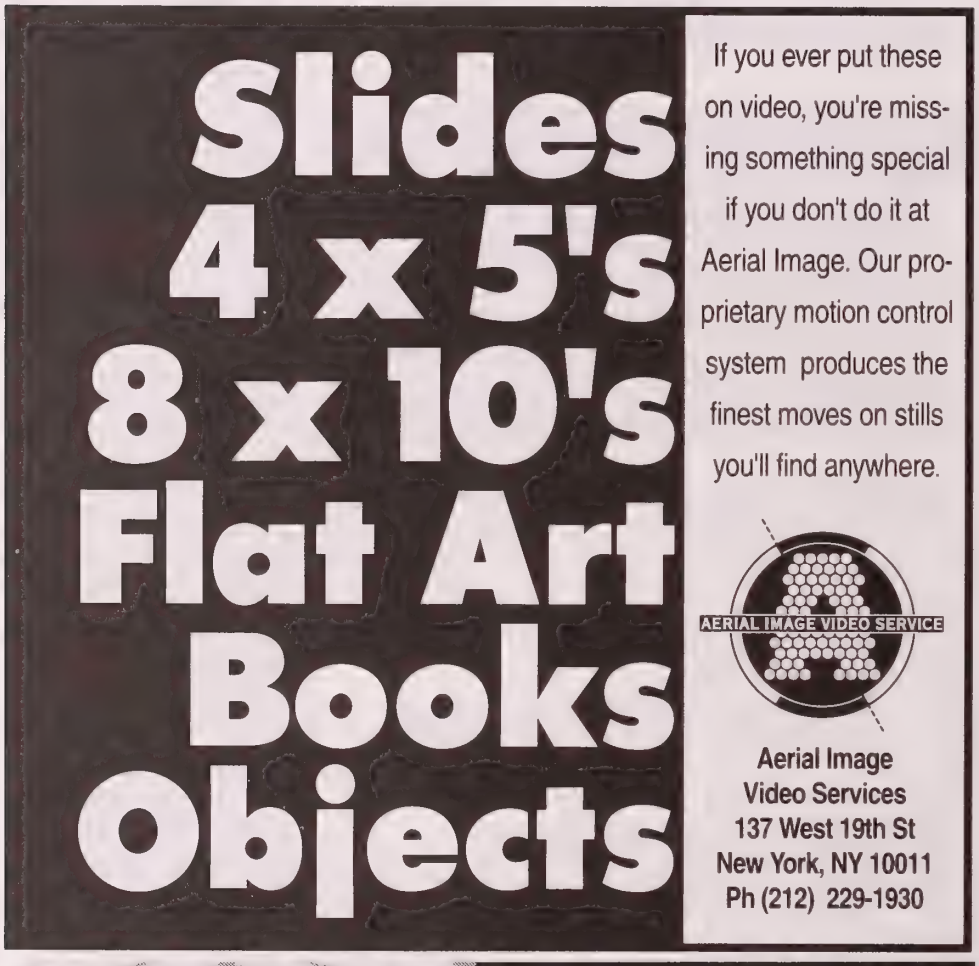
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REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

SHORT FILMS WANTED for "Twilight Zone-type" anthology series. Looking for short (up to 30 mins.) films in color, covering suspense, thriller, fantasy, science fiction, action/adventure & light horror. Prefer strong narrative films w/ plots twists & surprise endings. For more info, call (310) 396-3115.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit resumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For info: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE NEWZ, half-hour, late-night comedy TV show based on topical news events, is actively seeking submissions. Footage will be showcased on national series. Formats: D-2, Beta SP, Beta, 3/4", Super VHS, VHS, or Hi8. Cats: News-style stock shots (skylines, panoramas, local landmarks, local sports icons, etc.) & comedic shots. Must include signed submissions release for stock footage. For info or release form, contact: The Newz Submission Line (407) 354-6590.

THE SECOND WAVE, coprod. of Sagebrush Productions (LA/Wyoming) & Women Make Movies (NY), seeks materials on women's movement for series. W/ 4 1-hr. programs covering 30-yr. period from 1960 to 1990, series will present accurate record of events & ideas, dispel myths & examine legacy of unfinished revolution. Individuals interested in making videotaped memoirs of their experiences, thoughts & observations of movement can contact WMM for list of questions to guide video sessions. Those w/o access to videotaping equipment may contact WMM for info about equipment access in their region. Archival materials, incl. home movies, still photos, posters & other graphics, slides of artwork & tapes of women's music also being sought. To submit material, or for additional info regarding series, contact: Terry Lawler, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, ste. 500, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606; 2052 (fax).

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, or call (215) 895-2927.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong

statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

Opportunities • Gigs

MEDIA NETWORK, a nat'l nonprofit media resource organization, seeks executive director w/ strong leadership skills to manage staff, fundraise & work w/ bd of directors. Vision for using media to advance social change important. Also requires a proven track record of functioning well w/in multicultural setting. Position avail. mid-August. Search will remain open until position filled. Salary commensurate w/ experience, ranging from $32-$38K. Send resume, cover letter & salary requirements to: Director Search, Media Network, 39 W. 14th St. #403, NY, NY 10011.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

CHICAGO FILMLETTER, 3-year-old magazine for those into film/TV prod., is now under new owner/publisher. Every month FilmLetter covers both ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes, & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL; (312) 235-3456.

FREE CATALOG of ind. & experimental films on video! Call Alternative Filmworks, Inc. (800) 797-FILM.

INDEX ON CENSORSHIP, magazine for free speech, is produced 6 times/yr. in paperback format. Available by subscription. 1 yr. for $48. Send check or credit card info (Visa, MC, Amex) to: *Index on Censorship*, Lancaster House, 33 Islington High St., London N1 9LH. Fax subscription inquirie to: 011 44 71 278-1878.

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Morrie Warshawski, is an insider's look at obtaining financial support for film, TV & video projects. Chapters incl.: Preparing Your Project for Funding; Doing the Right Research Right; Meeting with Funders & Writing the Perfect Grant Proposal. Also contains list of resources. To order by VISA/MC:1-800-379-8808; by mail: Send $26.95 (post paid) check or m.o. (CA residents add $8.25%) to: Michael Wiese Productions, 4354 Laurel Canyon Blvd, ste. 234, Studio City, CA 91604.

SIX ROUTES TO FILM FINANCING, free tip sheet published by the Hollywood Film Institute, breaks down the 6 basic ways producers can finance films. For free copy, contact: Hollywood Film Institute, PO Box 481252, Dept. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 933-3456.

Resources • Funds

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY offers visiting fellowships for filmmakers/creative and performing artists. Will provide fellowships to people who aim to produce works dealing with pre-twentieth century American history designed for general public. Deadline: Oct. 17, 1994. At least 3 fellowships awarded for 4-8 week residencies between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31, 1995. For info: John B. Hench, director of research/publication, 185 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609-1634; (508) 755-5221 or 752-5813.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE administers for the NEA a program of grants for ind. media artists whose work shows exceptional promise & who have demonstrated a commitment to the art of the moving image. Highly competitive; limited grants. Previous recipients may not reapply. Grants range from $10,000 to $20,000. Appl. judged on basis of creativity of proposed project, artistic merit & technical quality of sample work. Deadline: Sept. 15. For more info, contact: American Film Insititute, Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027. (213) 856-7600.

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris at (612) 341-0755.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for $500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS Film Bureau offers financial assistance specifically for film speaker's fees to non-profit community orgs. in NY state. Priority given to groups showing works by ind. filmmakers. Bureau funds only film presentations. Requests must originate from sponsoring org. Max. subsidy per org. is $1,000/yr. Max. subsidy for orgs. receiving NYSCA exhibition funds is $600/yr. Bureau offers speakers fees on sliding scale (up to $250 for local artists; $300 for artists traveling to sites that require overnight stay.) Deadlines: Aug. 15, Oct. 15. In letter, incl. list of films, film speakers to be hired w/ fees; other sources of funding; plans for advertising; amount requested & anticipated audience figures. Send to: Duana Butler, film bureau coordinator, FVA, 817 Broadway, NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

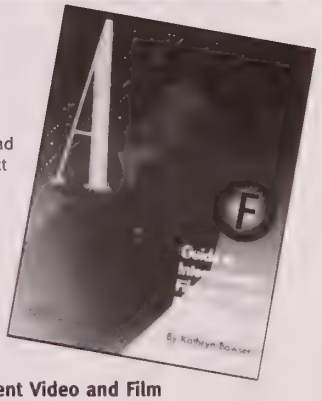
THE FUNDING EXCHANGE's Paul Robeson Fund for Ind. Media will supply appls after Sept. 1 for deadline of December 1, 1994. Grant decisions will be announced by March 30, 1995. The fund accepts appls. for doc film & video projects in preprod. or distribution stages only. Projects must address critical political & social issues, have highly developed distribution initiative & have ability to be used for political advocacy &/or organizing purposes. Producers utilizing alternative forms of social issue doc making are encouraged to apply. Appls will not be faxed. Write or call: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

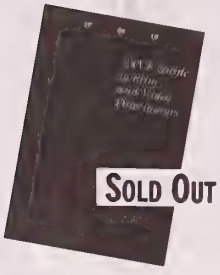
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AIVF Guide to International Film & Video Festivals
by Kathryn Bowser
published by FIVF
238 pages, $29.95/$24.95 member price

The 3rd edition of FIVF's bestseller is a completely indexed and easy-to-read compendium of over 600 international film and video festivals, with contact information, entry regulations, dates and deadlines, categories, accepted formats, and much more. The *Guide* includes information on all types of festivals: small and large, specialized and general, domestic and foreign.

An important reference source which belongs in the library of every media professional: independent producers, distributors, festival directors, programmers, curators, exhibitors.





AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors
A Publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film
edited by Kathryn Bowser
184 pages, $19.50

A must-read for independent film and video-makers searching for the right distributor. *The AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors* presents handy profiles of over 150 commercial and nonprofit distributors, practical information and company statistics on the type of work handled, primary markets, relations with producers, marketing and promotion, foreign distribution and contacts. Fully indexed, with additional contact lists of cable/satellite services and public television outlets, as well as a bibliography. This is the best compendium of distribution and information especially tailored for independent producers available.

Alternative Visions
Distributing Independent Video in a Home Video World
by Debra Franco
a co-publication of AFI and FIVF, 181 pages
$12.95/$9.95 AIVF and AFI member price

Video cassettes and video stores have changed forever the economics of distribution for all moving image media—including alternative films and tapes. What has happened to institutional markets? What promise does home video distribution really hold for non-mainstream work? Chapters cover selling to schools, libraries, and individual consumers. Includes detailed case studies of the marketing of eight independent works. Essential reading for anyone with an interest in home video distribution.



SEE ORDER CARD FOR ORDERING INFORMATION

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO & FILMMAKERS

Diverse, committed, opinionated, and FIERCELY INDEPENDENT—these are the video and filmmakers who make up the national membership of AIVF. Documentary and feature filmmakers, animators, experimentalist, distributors, educators, students, curators—all concerned that their work make a difference—find the **Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers**, the national service organization for independent media producers, vital to their professional lives. Whether it's our monthly magazine, ***The Independent***, or the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while letting you know **you're not alone.**

AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. ***JOIN AIVF TODAY!***

Here's what AIVF membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals*—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with a festival consultant for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country, call the office for the one nearest you. *Plus*, members are carrying on an active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information in person or on the phone about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs.
Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual/Student Membership

Year's subscription to *The Independent* • Access to all plans and discounts • Festival/Distribution/Library services • Information Services • Discounted admission to seminars • Book discounts • Advocacy action alerts • Eligibility to vote and run for board of directors

Non-profit Organizational/Business & Industry Membership

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- ❑ $150/business & industry
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(includes Canada & Mexico)

- ❑ $40/student (enclose copy of student ID)
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LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications ($35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, exec. director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS announces grants for film/video prod. Before applying, artists generally have history of support & critical recognition for their media work at the state, regional, or national level. Artists applying as individuals or through orgs may submit 1 appl. in cat. Previous grantees will not be considered for same project unless applicant submits evidence that substantial portion has been completed with previous grant. Grants are generally for prod. of single film/video projects that exemplify use of these media as art forms. All phases of project eligible for support. Matching grants to orgs range from $20,000 to $75,000. Nonmatching grants to individuals range from $10,000 to $35,000. A grant period of more than 1 yr is allowed. Appl. pkg. must incl. film/video sample; 3 copies of Production Supplementary Information Sheet; 2 copies of screenplay or story treatment; 1 copy of statement concerning clearance of rights; 1 copy of signed statements by major participants verifying involvement in project; for previous grantees, 1 copy of Interim Report. Films must be 16mm or S-8. Videos must be Hi8, VHS, or 3/4". Laser discs may be Level 1 or 2. Deadline: Sept. 30. For appl., write: Media Arts Program, rm. 720, NEA, Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506-0001; (202) 682-5452.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR FILM & VIDEO PRESERVATION at American Film Institute announces availability of $350,000 for "Archives Film Preservation Projects." Initiative is part of institute's ongoing commemoration of 100th anniversary of cinema. Grants awarded to assist orgs in paying for lab costs to preserve and restore films of artistic & cultural value. Program is national & encourages projects of signifcance to anniversary &/or legacy of American cinema. All film types eligible, incl. features, shorts, avante garde cinema, & film copies of landmark TV programs. Must be tax-exempt org. & must have existing archival film preservation program, adequate staff & equipment for project. Must also provide reasonable access to reference materials generated as part of preservation process. Deadline: Aug. 12. Notification no earlier than Dec. 1994. For appl. & requirements, contact: National Center for Film & Video Preservation, American Film Institute, John F. Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. 20566; (202) 828-4070; fax: (202) 659-1970.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES Projects in media grants support

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planning, writing, or prod. of TV & radio programs in humanities intended for general audiences. Collaboration of scholars in humanities w/ experienced producers, writer & directors is required. Endowment has special funding opportunity for doc film series. Eligible applicants are nonprofit institutions & organizations, incl. public TV & radio stations. Deadline: Sept. 14. NEH: (202) 606-8278.

NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. *Cannot* be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of the last 3 yrs., or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON ARTS' Electronic Media & Film Program announces availability of funds for distribution of recently completed work by ind. media artists residing in NY State. Audio, film video or installations incorporating these media are eligible for grants up to $3,000 toward duplication, marketing & related costs of distribution. This funding category was established to help professional artists gain greater exposure to their work. Funds will be administered by Women Make Movies, NYC-based distributor. Appls will otherwise be reviewed by Council on Arts in manner consistent w/ other appls. Deadline: Sept. 8. Works-in-progress ineligible. For appl. & guidelines, contact: Electronic Media & Film Program, NY State Council on Arts, 915 Broadway, NY, NY 10010; (212) 387-7055 or (800) GET-ARTS.

PHILADELPHIA IND. FILM/VIDEO ASSOCIATION provides small prod. grants, primarily completion funds, to noncommercial, ind. film/video/ audio works by PIFVA members in greater Philadelphia area. Deadline: Oct. PIFVA, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 387-5125.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed- media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA is accepting grant appls for thesis film projects by students enrolled in accredited film programs. For more info, write: Jennifer Reis, director of grants programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021; (212) 744-3221.

UTAH ARTS COUNCIL offers grants to encourage artistic development, to support the realization of specific artistic ideas & to recognize significant contributions artists make to creative enviornment of our state. Deadline: Oct. 3. Artists grant supports activities directly related to artist' work &/or career that are availible during limited time. Contact: Tey Haines, Utah Arts Council, 617 East S. Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84102-1177; (801) 533-5895.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For appl., tour, or info, call (716) 442-8676.

Memoranda continued from p. 60

NEW HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN



Since Mutual of Omaha has raised its rates significantly, we have added a new health insurance plan for members in the tri-state area. The GHI "Platinum Plan" is a dual-option managed care plan with a network of doctors in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey. For specific information, call agents Jeff Bader (718) 291-5433 or Doug Polifron (212) 752-0647.

TEIGET is also offering a new dental insurance plan; for benefits, rates and availability, call Burt Diamond, (212) 758-5675.

We regret to advise members that due to changes in state laws, the Mutual of Omaha health plan is now unavailable in Minnesota and Washington, in addition to New Jersey and California, as previously announced.

We are continuing to seek affordable alternatives for members in other parts of the country. Depending on your state of residence, the options are now Mutual of Omaha, TEIGET, GHI, or the plan independently offered by Support Services Alliance. For contact info regarding any of these plans, call the AIVF office.

ON-LINE UPDATE

America Online has finally reached the decision that the coalition of media organizations we have been working with cannot have our own area on AOL. Right on cue, two knights in shining armor have appeared: Mark Abbate and Phil Palumbo of Abbate Video have offered us not only the continued use of their bulletin board, but are working with cyber-wonderwoman Susan Walsh of Newton Television to expand our offerings there. If you are new to AIVF or to America Online: once you are on-line, pull down "GO TO" from the menu at the top of the screen, and select "key word"; at the prompt, type abbate (2 "b"s) to access the bulletin board, then select message center, then topics, and finally aivf (at the end). To subscribe to America Online, call (800) 827-6364.

All are welcome to join in our discussion topic on the WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link) in the filmmaking conference. You can get information about the WELL by calling (415) 332-4335 (voice); their internet address is well.sf.ca.us. And a member has approached CompuServe about the possibility of establishing an independent filmmakers' forum on that service; we'll announce updates as they occur.

In the long term, we are exploring alternatives for a whole-systems approach to an online presence, with the assistance of members, consultants, and the indefatigable Ms. Walsh. We invite your suggestions; let us know what you're finding as you use these new technologies and how we can put them to use for the field as a whole. We are particularly interested in talking to other organizations and businesses providing extensive database information online (as we would the festival and distribution guides, the membership lists, grant info, employment info, and so on). Other uses we envision include teleconferencing and live chat, in addition to the BBS activity we're engaged in now. We very much appreciate member input as we enter this field.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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BY PAMELA CALVERT

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT

We are saddened to announce that after seven years at AIVF/FIVF, Kathryn Bowser has left the staff, but we are pleased that she will still edit the festivals column of *The Independent* and continue her extraordinary work as editor of FIVF's Festival and Distributor Guides, as well as new publications under discussion. Beginning this month, she will also conduct periodic consultations and workshops for members on festivals and distribution; see events listings for specific information. FIVF will continue to maintain its representation of foreign film festivals through our festival bureau, to be administered by Pamela Calvert.

We are very excited by Kathryn's plans to expand her work as partner in the distributor KJM3 and promoting Haile Gerima's phenomenal new film *Sankofa*. We look forward to working with Kathy in her new relationship with AIVF/FIVF and wish her well with her many other projects.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FESTIVAL CONSULTATION

Former FIVF festival bureau director Kathryn Bowser will meet with members to present an overview of the current festivals scene, offer strategies from her insider's perspective, and answer specific questions.

When: Wednesday, August 24, 6:00 pm
Where: AIVF office
Price: $8 AIVF members; $10 nonmembers

GRANTWRITING INTENSIVE

A one-day workshop focusing on the nuts and bolts of getting grant money for independent productions. Topics covered include: defining your project, locating potential funders, writing effectively about your film, adapting proposals for specific funders, preparing sample tapes, and strategic budgeting. The class will use a participatory workshop format and, if at all possible, students should come with a draft description for their film or video. Instructor **Peter Miller** produced the ITVS documentary *Passin' It On*, which is part of the 1994 *P.O.V.* series on PBS, and was coordinating producer of the Academy Award-winning documentary *American Dream*. *Limited to 15 participants; pre-registration with deposit required.*

When: Saturday, October 1, 10 am - 4:30 pm
Where: AIVF office
Price: $50 AIVF members; $60 nonmembers

MEET AND GREETS

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.*

ALYCE DISSETTE
Director, New Voices, New Visions and Voyager 501(C)3, at Voyager (producer of multimedia laserdiscs and CD-ROMs)
Wednesday, September 28, 6:30 pm

CYNTHIA GEHRIG
Executive Director
Jerome Foundation
Wednesday, October 19, 6:30 pm

SALON NEWS

"MANY TO MANY:" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss your work, meet other independents, share war stories, and generally socialize.

New York City:
When: August 16, September 20, 6-8 pm.
Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 2nd Avenue (9th St.)

Los Angeles:
When: August 2, September 13*, 6-8 pm
Where: The Abbey, 692 North Robertson Boulevard, West Hollywood
(* note September date is *2nd* Tuesday)

Chicago:
Call the AIVF office for news on next meeting.

WANTED: NYC SALON COORDINATOR

After inspiring and initiating the New York salon, member Jonathan Berman has moved on to other projects. We intend for the salons to be member-driven activities and need one or more New Yorkers to pick up the ball to keep the monthly event growing and evolving. We've found that if more than one person coordinates the salons, more ideas can be generated and responsibilities can be shared so no single member gets overwhelmed. We'd like to expand and enhance the NY event, and would love your energy, feedback, and ideas. Call Pam Calvert to become involved.

SF & LA SPECIAL MEMBER MEETINGS

AIVF staffer Pamela Calvert will be in California in August and will hold meetings to meet members, talk about AIVF's plans for the next year, and get feedback about how we can be more active on the "Left Coast."

San Francisco: Tuesday, August 16, 7 pm, at Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th Street.

Los Angeles: Sunday, August 21; time and place will be announced at Los Angeles salon (see above), or call office for more information.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices to learn about the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the resource library. *RSVP appreciated.*

When: Monday, September 12, 6 pm
Where: AIVF offices

VOTE!

AIVF's board of directors is made up of volunteer members who have been nominated and elected by *you*. As good AIVF citizens, it is your responsibility to participate in the election process and return the ballot we are sending you this summer. The following members are running for three-year terms on the board: Joe Berlinger, Wade Black, Melissa Burch, Glenn Francis Frontera, Marlon Fuentes, James Klein, Peter Lewnes, Doug Lindeman, Diane Markrow, Louis Massiah, Robert Richter, and Yvonne Welbon. There are five positions open. *Your vote counts—exercise it!*

COMING TO THE MARKET?

September's Independent Feature Film Market is a real pressure-cooker scene; whether you are buying or selling, sometimes you need a break from the madding crowds. The AIVF office is right around the corner from the Angelika; come on up to take a breather. Particularly if you're here from out of town, our staff can help you negotiate New York: directions, pointers, and advice all free for the asking. We are at 625 Broadway, between Houston and Bleecker, next door to the flashing neon sombrero, 9th floor, 11 am - 6 pm weekdays.

AIVF executive director Ruby Lerner and director of programs and services Pam Calvert will be shuttling back and forth between the office and the Market all week. If you're a member, look for us and introduce yourself!

Most importantly, come to Telephone Bar (2nd Ave. & 9th St.) on Tuesday evening, September 20, 6-8 pm. We're in the back room: have a drink and meet fellow members and staff. See you there.

DISTRIBUTOR GUIDE UPDATE

The good news is that the *AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors* has been a valued and popular resource for the field since it was published in 1990. So valued and popular, in fact, that the entire print run has now sold out (the bad news). Editor Kathryn Bowser is working on bringing the guide up to date so we can copublish a new edition with National Video Resources that, with any luck, will be ready by the end of the year. We are sorry for the lapse in availability, and will announce publication of the new edition in a future issue of *The Independent*.

Memoranda continued on p. 59

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

The National Endowment for the Humanities is one of the country's primary funders of independent media projects. We are, therefore, pleased to announce that FIVF will host an evening presentation by the NEH staff to discuss the Endowment, the types of grants it offers, what it looks for in proposals, how proposals are reviewed, and how to make your application not just eligible but *competitive*. Guests will include filmmakers who have received NEH funding in the past as well as staff from the New York Council on the Humanities. The following day, NEH staff will meet individually with mediamakers to discuss specific projects and applications in film, television, and radio; you must attend the evening presentation to be given an individual appointment. *Free; AIVF members given priority until 9/15; limited capacity; reservation required.*

Evening presentation: Wednesday, October 5
6:30-7 pm reception; 7-9 pm presentation
at Anthology Film Archives, 32 2nd Ave., NYC

Individual appointments: Thursday, October 6, 9 am-5 pm. Location tba.

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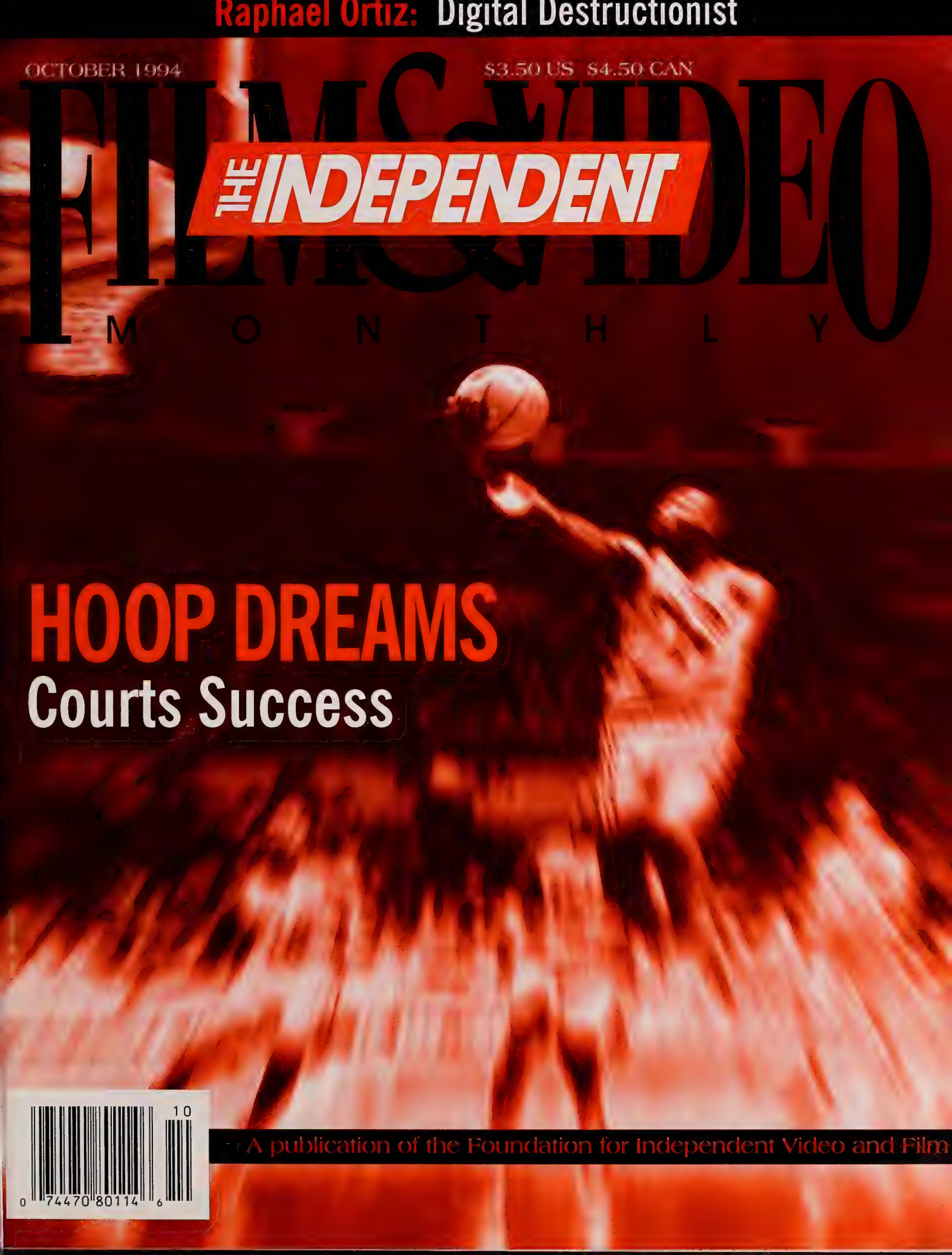
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Photo: Daniel Christmas, courtesy Major Sports, Chicago

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COVER: Before *Hoop Dreams* won the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival in January, the Kartemquin team that produced and directed the three-hour documentary had yet to master the art of the deal. Now all that's changed. Pat Aufderheide catches up with the Dream Team to discuss the theatrical release, book deal, and fictionalization of the rim-rocker doc.

Also in this issue, Scott MacDonald talks with Raphael Ortiz, whose "Destructionist" approach to filmmaking has fueled his 30-plus year career and his avant-garde works. More recently, Ortiz has entered the digital age by using electronic technologies to "chop up" film artifacts as he once used an axe to attack and edit. Cover photo courtesy John Iltis Associates.

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THE NEW POWER GENERATION

To the editor:

Thank you for Barbara Bliss Osborn's article "Cable Access Meets 21st Century Comunications" [July 1994]. Those of us who work in access television may be aware of the changes in access, but most other people aren't, and Ms. Osborn did a good job of summarizing the situation.

With one exception. Her preposterous claim that "Access' motivations...are driven by a desire for money and power" is unfounded and inacccurate, and she proceeds to disprove her statement with the well articulated comment by Anthony Riddle: "The real motivation has always been not to leave people communication-poor in a society where gathering information is dependent on technology." Is this the desire for money and power Osborn speaks of? Nowhere in the article does she even address her claim.

Access centers *need* money and a certain amount of power within the community to exist, as do any not-for-profit organizations. But while access centers may be shifting from cable-television-only facilities to media facilities, that doesn't mean they will abandon public service for the lucrative potential market of the information superhighway, and it is insulting to the people who work in access centers to imply that they would.

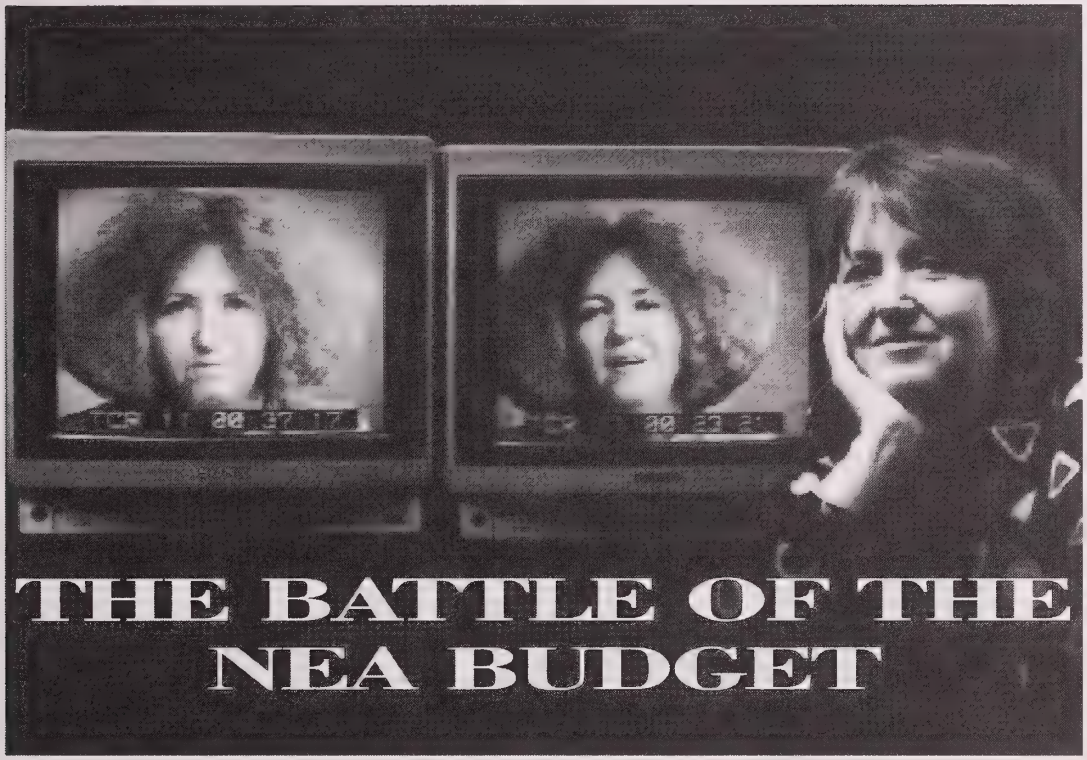
Jamie Kravitz
Public Access Coordinator
City of West Hollywood, CA

Barbara Osborn responds:

It looks like Ms. Kravitz went for my bait. In a deliberately provocative lead, I used those two big bad words, Money and Power, words that are riddled with ambivalence and negative connotations for the progressive community.

Yes, the access community and the public interest community at large need money. They also need more than the "certain amount of power" Kravitz refers to. They need power. Why mince words?

Too often the public interest community hems and haws about money and power. Maybe that's why we keep losing. If our intention is to influence society, Money and Power is what it's going to take.



Allie Light's *Dialogues with Madwomen* was funded in part by a National Endowment for the Arts Western States Regional Grant. Facing a budget cut of two- to five-percent, the NEA may be forced to fund fewer independent media projects during its 1995 fiscal year. Courtesy *P.O.V.*

Agency Awaits House-Senate Decision on Extent of Cuts

Voting on the Interior Appropriations Bill, which determines the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) annual budget, is a ritual closely monitored by arts advocates. But those hoping for an uneventful hearing this year were disappointed. Once again, congressional opponents of the agency dredged up a controversial grant to fuel anti-NEA sentiments, the net result being another round of budgets cuts. On June 23, the House voted for a two percent cut to the endowment's $170-million budget, while the Senate approved a five percent cut in July. At press time, the Appropriations bill had taken a back seat to votes on both the health care and crime bills, but a House-Senate conference committee is expected to reconcile the two versions after Labor Day. A final bill voted on by both chambers of Congress shortly thereafter.

In a move that surprised and infuriated many, the Senate singled out three specific programs within the endowment for cuts—Visual Arts, Performing Arts, and Presenting and Commissioning. Each could potentially suffer a 40 percent cut, depending on the outcome of the conference committee.

The threat of losing even a small percentage of funds is daunting to those dance, theater, and arts groups that receive funding from these programs. "The NEA money is important to these groups," says Caron Atlas, director of the American Festival Project. "Many communities don't have the local funds to support such projects because of the poverty in their areas." Atlas adds that, if severe cuts are made, the effect on the field will be felt. "The good ol' boy organizations will remain. But the newer groups that are working to improve their communities will be hardest hit."

Arts advocates were outraged by the Senate's attempt to micro-manage the agency or, as some interpreted the action, to punish the NEA for funding controversial projects. "Such punitive cuts set up the Senate as a super peer review panel," says Jill Bond of People For the American Way, whose organization has been a leading advocate for the arts community throughout the Appropriations procedure. In a recent online conversation over the Artswire computer network, one advocate speculated that the magnitude of the cut in theater monies "is also a symbolic attack on [NEA chair] Jane [Alexander]'s leadership."

This year the center of controversy was a performance art project by Ron Athey, staged at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis on March 5. Athey, who is HIV-positive, drew blood from his scalp and arm with needles. He then made ritual incisions in the back of an assistant (who is not HIV-infected), soaked up the blood with paper towels, and hung the towels on a clothesline above the audience. According to published reports, Athey received approximately $150 of the $104,000 NEA grant to the Walker this year.

Possibly due to the proximity of the House hearings to the performance, discussion of the event dominated the proceedings. The House subcommittee, chaired by Sidney Yates (D-IL), a longtime NEA supporter, had recommended a $1-million increase. But numerous Representatives offered amendments that ranged from wiping out the agency altogether to reducing its budget anywhere from one to five percent. Ultimately, the House voted 380 to 41 to cut the FY1995 budget by $3.4 million, or two percent of the $170.2 million allotted for 1994.

Discussion of the Athey performance didn't end in the House. Word of the performance prompted Robert Byrd (D-WV), the influential chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and Senator Don Nickles (R-OK) to write a letter to Alexander criticizing her for defending the Walker Arts Center. In the letter, they asked for assurances that government-supported programs will not misuse taxpayer funding. Byrd's subcommittee later recommended a five-percent cut to the NEA's three programs.

By the time the vote reached the Senate floor, the uproar had subsided. According to People For's Bond, both a fervent last-minute campaign by arts advocates to inform their Senators about the importance of NEA funding and pro-NEA editorials that appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and other papers across the country, contributed to the civility of the proceedings. Advocates and editorial writers had to work quickly because the July 25 Senate vote came earlier than anticipated.

The overall mood at the Senate hearings was more congenial than it had been in the House. Jesse Helms' sole amendment was confined to a direct response to Athey's performance, stating the NEA would not be allowed to fund works involving "human mutilation" or "the letting of blood." This was defeated by a vote of 49 to 42. Senator Jim Jeffords (R-VT), who spoke eloquently in support of the endowment, offered an amendment to restore the Senate's proposed cuts. After Senator Byrd made conciliatory remarks, suggesting he would take a softer line towards the

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endowment in conference committee, Jeffords withdrew the amendment. Despite the more humane tone, the Senate ultimately approved a bill calling for a five percent cut ($8.5 million).

NEA spokesperson Josh Dare says he is "very pleased with the bi-partisan support of the endowment on the Senate floor," and adds he is "cautiously optimistic" that the conference committee will defer to the House's two-percent cut, or that a compromise somewhere between two and five percent will be reached. Still, he points out, "For two years, the NEA has had to hope for the lesser of two evils." According to Dare, the endowment's budget has decreased 46 percent since 1979, when adjusted for inflation. In addition, the agency has been forced to cut 20 funding programs since 1990, and six programs now operate on alternate-year cycles.

THE FUTURE OF MEDIA ARTS

Where does all this leave media artists? Not in good shape. Yates' subcommittee recommended that $200,000 of the endowment's $10.3 million Media Arts budget be reallocated to the grant category of Folk Arts. This recommendation was based on President Clinton's budget request, and sources close to the endowment were at a loss to explain why Media Arts was singled out for the second year in a row. The recommended $200,000 "transfer" was included in the House bill and, therefore, will be included in the House-Senate conference debate.

The Media Arts budget has slid from $13.9 million in 1990 to approximately $10.3 million in 1994. A source at the NEA says the department is unsure how it would absorb future cuts, but that grants to independent productions and to media arts centers have thus far been fairly well protected, while Programming in the Arts, the division of the Media Arts program that funds TV and radio projects, received greater cuts. However, according to Dare, the number of grants awarded to individual artists has declined over the years as has the amount of the awards.

People For's Bond says the Media Arts program "needs to do a better job of demonstrating why they need the money" because members of Congress who know media artists receive money from CPB and PBS don't realize the smaller grants offered by the endowment often make a big difference, acting as vital seed money. "The weak point here is advocacy on behalf of the media arts community," she observes.

Although arts advocates may have pulled together to prevent deeper cuts in NEA funding, the war is far from over. It's clear that for the agency to continue funding media projects, independent artists must continue to communicate with legislators about NEA-funded projects that impact positively on their communities.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

P.O.V. BRANCHES OUT

Now in its eighth season on PBS and still standing after numerous censorship battles, the documentary series *P.O.V.* is experiencing a significant growth spurt, with a package of films on women, a possible spin-off series, and a heady campaign for viewer interaction.



Barbara Bader focuses on her preoccupation with feeling fat in *Beautiful Piggies*, part of the *Women's Voices* series that APS has packaged and sold to 20 PBS affiliates thus far. Films for the series were culled from works initially submitted to *P.O.V.*

Courtesy American Program Service

The first offshoot is *Women's Voices*, a package of five programs on such women's issues as abortion (*When Abortion Was Illegal: Untold Stories*, by Dorothy Fadiman); female political action in South Africa (*Mama Awethu!*, by Bethany Yarrow); early Japanese feminism (*Ripples of Change*, by Nanako Kurihara); homelessness (*It Was a Wonderful Life*, by Michele Ohayon); and one woman's fear of body fat (*Beautiful Piggies*, by Barbara Bader). Culled from material that, for one reason or another, didn't make the final cut for *P.O.V.*, the works were packaged by American Program Service (APS), an alternate public TV program service, and sold to PBS affiliates as either a free-standing series or an add-on to the regular *P.O.V.* schedule. At press time, over 20 affiliates, including all major markets, had picked up *Women's Voices* for the fall season.

APS had been trying to wangle such a project from *P.O.V.* for a number of years, but never came up with quite the right films or packaging mechanism. "We got lucky" says Nelsa Gidney, a part-time program officer for APS, who chose the five titles from the 15 recommended by *P.O.V.* "It just came out that there was a lovely series of films all by and about women." Gidney hopes to make this project an annual one.

A second spin-off currently in development is a video diary series tentatively titled *E.C.U. (Extreme Close Up)*. Inspired by the positive response to *Silverlake Life: A View from Here*, Tom Joslin's video diary of his battle with AIDS, which Peter Friedman turned into a feature-length documentary and *P.O.V.* aired in 1993, the series is being created to showcase intimate Hi8 portraits that tie into larger social issues. "Independents are very good at looking creatively at a subject they know well," says *P.O.V.* co-executive producer Ellen Schneider "and we want to see if this can be channeled into a new type of television as evocative as any movie-of-the-week."

P.O.V. is using development funds from the Nathan Cummings Foundation to hold regional workshops in an effort to guide potential video diarists through the complexities of the genre. The initial workshops, held in San Francisco and New York and cosponsored by Film Arts Foundation and Film/Video Arts respectively, have focused on aesthetics, structure, editing, and ethics. A Los Angeles workshop will be held on October 22, cosponsored by Independent Feature Project-West.

"What has become really clear," says Schneider, "is the value of having an outsider [on a personal work], since it's difficult for [the maker] to keep boundaries and distance and to know when to end the story." The "outsiders" present at these workshops have included *P.O.V.* staff, lawyers, and veteran diarists such as Friedman. K.D. Davis, who has just begun a video on her reconciliation with her devoutly religious Jewish parents, attended the San Francisco workshop in June. She found not only practical advice, but an ad hoc support group. "Turning the lens back at myself is a very terrifying thing," she says. "So, it's great to hear that others

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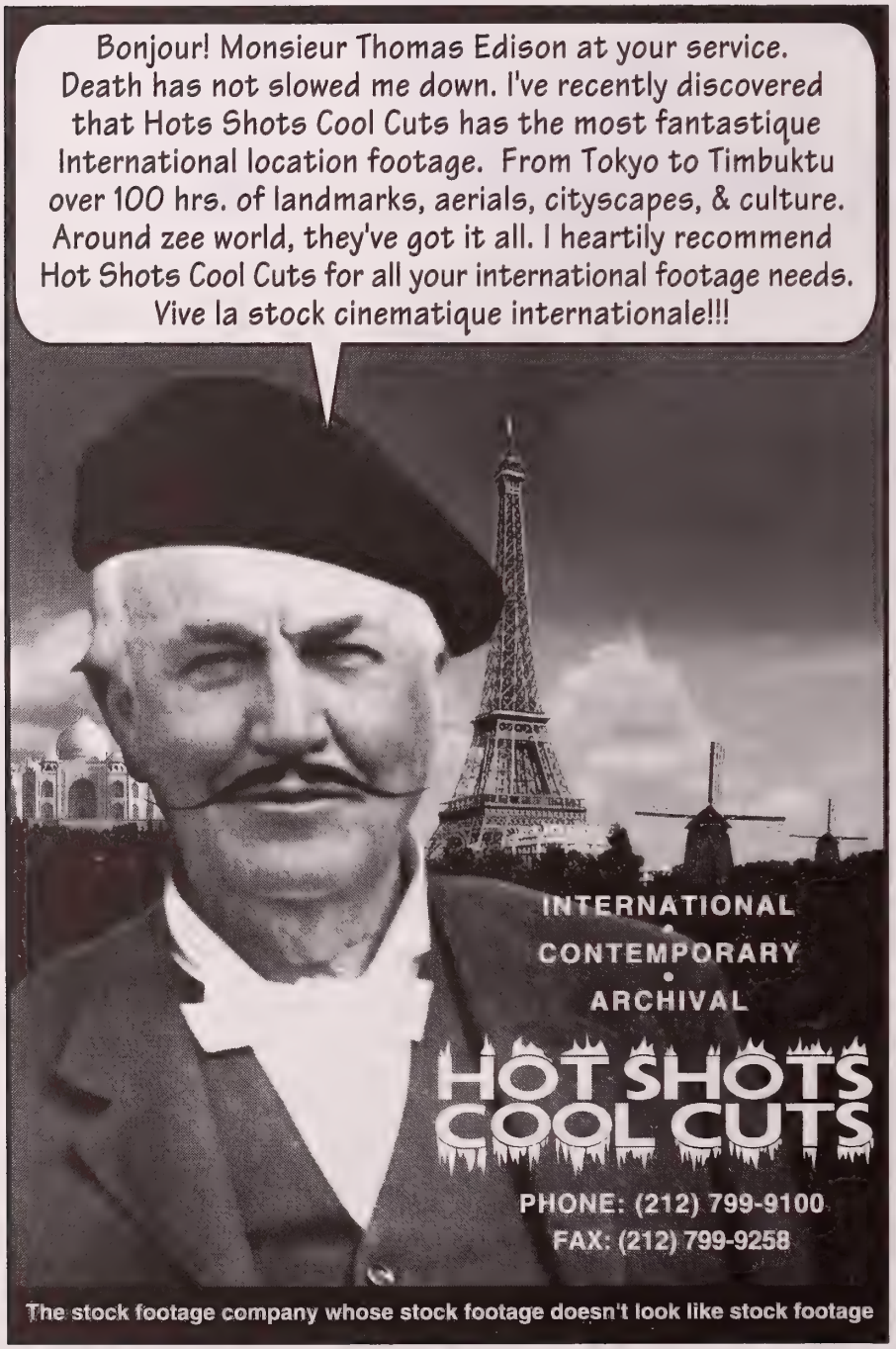
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The appearance of *E.C.U.* and *Women's Voices* may quiet independents who gripe that, with only 10 documentaries per season, *P.O.V.* too often passes over smaller, quality works for glitzier productions with big names (and, in many cases, distributors) attached. One independent sent *P.O.V.* a video letter chiding them for broadcasting *Heart of Darkness* and *Time Indefinite*, which had already been theatrically released.

Although the emergence of new series may bring about broader opportunities, says Schneider, the definition of an independent should remain flexible and include mainstream filmakers working within the independent form. "We wouldn't want to privilege one part of the community over the other," she says. "It makes the field stronger if the audience is exposed to a range [of producers]."

P.O.V. is also initiating live, online, chat sessions to strengthen ties with viewers. Every Wednesday at 10 pm EST on America Online, co-executive producer Marc Weiss joins a filmmaker whose work was shown on *P.O.V.* the previous evening for an hour-long Q&A with 40 to 100 AOL members.

Peter Miller, who went online in July to discuss *Passin' It On*, admires *P.O.V.* for its groundbreaking effort, but found the event rather trying at times. Citing computer hang-ups, delayed response time, and missing text, Miller came to the conclusion that "The technology is still rather primitive. As great as [the idea] is in theory, it still needs a lot of work."

Weiss admits that technical problems can be a barrier to in-depth discussion, but sees the events as fitting a larger philosophy on television as a two-way process. "Television separates the viewers," he says. "There's no opportunity for talking to us or each other; we're experimenting with technologies that will [change that]."

To receive *P.O.V.*'s annual call for entries, phone (212) 989-8121 to be placed on the mailing list.

SUE MURRAY

Sue Murray is the editorial assistant for The Independent. *This fall she will enter the Ph.D program in Radio TV/Film at University of Texas, Austin.*

RUTGERS OPENS MEDIA EDUCATION LAB

When Rutgers University and On Television, Ltd. announced the opening of a new media education center at the university's Newark campus earlier this year, they were initiating one of the first media education programs for college students that focuses on television's role in serving the public.

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Educating educators (l-r): Mary Megee, director of Rutgers University's new Media Education Lab, George Heinemann from the Advisory Board of On Television, Ltd., and Edwin Newman, narrator of the *On Television* series.
Courtesy On Television, Ltd.

"At most schools students study the history of television, but it's from a commercial orientation," says Mary Megee, On Television Ltd.'s founder and the director of the Rutgers lab. "They need to know the profound impact of the art they are making and the responsibility that comes with that art."

Megee is also the executive producer of *On Television*, a documentary series broadcast on PBS over the last decade. The series' first three one-hour installments, which aired respectively in 1984, 1988, and 1992, examine television's influence on children, its violent images, and the history of communications policy. The lab's work revolves around both the series' content and its production, as students learn to analyze television and will eventually assist in creating the remaining 10 hours of the documentary.

In the two courses she teaches, Megee asks students to view televised images critically rather than passively by, for instance, screening videotapes of programs that illustrate how ratings and advertising can influence content. A typical example is showing how a tabloid news program may dramatize a news event, using look-alike actors, while a network news program uses actual footage and interviews. Megee says the goal is to show students "the difference between fact and fiction, marketing and public service."

After completing Megee's courses, students can continue in television production classes where they will act as camera operators, researchers, production assistants, and interviewers for *On Television*. They may also contribute to accompanying teacher study guides. The courses are required of undergraduate journalism and television students, though others can choose them as electives.

Besides providing the lab's equipment, including a television studio, five portable cameras, and a mobile production van, Rutgers will cover the salaries of its three professors. The lab recently received a Kellogg grant to cover portions of a video conference with media educators from across the country to be held in the spring of 1995, and the university is helping to secure funds for the final 10 installments of *On Television*. Megee anticipates that the next four segments, with topics ranging from TV as cultural influence to TV as health educator, will be completed in the next two years.

Dr. Annette Juliano, chairperson of Rutgers-Newark's Department of Visual and Performing Arts, knew she wanted a media education program when the university put her in charge of its media center in July 1992. Classes began in September 1993, but it wasn't until June of this year that Rutgers and On Television Ltd. formalized their relationship with a contract and a press conference.

In the future, Megee hopes the lab will expand to train teachers in media education. "When I started a million years ago, that was my main objective," she says. She and Juliano have also discussed testing the lab's study guides in Newark-area schools and homes. Meanwhile, getting Rutgers students to think about what they see on television is her main concern. "These kids have to sort out good and bad and right and wrong without much help," she says. "And that's why I'm doing what I'm doing."

KIMBERLY WINSTON

Kimberly Winston is a freelance journalist based in the San Francisco Bay area.

SEQUELS

John Valadez, director of *Passin' It On*, recently settled a $2-million claim that he had filed against the New York City Police department in early 1993 ["Director Files Claim Against NYPD," May 1993] for confiscating his camera, arresting him, and he subsequently beating him senseless on the even of the first Rodney King trial verdict. The claim was settled for $15,000. Valadez plans to use the money to finance his next project, a documentary on Abbie Hoffman, now in preproduction.

The films and videos of **James Herbert** ["James Herbert's Naked Truths," July 1994] are available through: the Museum of Modern Art circulating film and video dept. (film rentals): (212) 708-9530; Picture Start (videos only): (312) 326-6233; Chicago Filmmakers Dept. Proj., (films only): (800)343-5540; and C-Hundred Film Corp. (*Figures* on VHS): (706) 353-1494.

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CHARLES BURNETT
director
GLASS SHIELD

BY O.FUNILAYO MAKARAH



Courtesy filmmaker

Police corruption, brutality, cover-up. In the nineties, some people think they've heard too much about these topics—especially when the focus is Los Angeles. But Charles Burnett, a longtime Los Angeles resident and UCLA alumnus, powerfully addresses these subjects in his hard-hitting new film, *Glass Shield*. His first dramatic feature since *To Sleep with Anger* in 1991, the film displays Burnett's brilliance as a writer and director in its skillfully crafted, insightful scenes portraying the complexities of institutionalized injustice.

Glass Shield is loosely based on *One of Us*, a screenplay by L.A. police officer J.J. Johnson and Ned Walsh that charts Johnson's tenure as the first African American deputy in the Edgemar police station, a suburban station rife with racism, sexism, and corruption. Burnett begins the film with a lively comic strip about cops and bad guys, but his characters are far from caricatures. Moreso than in most studio or even independent films, they emerge as fully developed, complex, and humanly flawed individuals.

Johnson (Michael Boatman, of TV's *China Beach*) is introduced as a young, overly eager rookie who has just achieved his childhood dream of graduating from the Sheriff's Academy. His arrival on the job coincides with community demonstrations and televised allegations that his station is responsible for the death of a jailed African American youth. While united against this outside scrutiny, the station has deep internal fissures. The Commander and deputies offer Johnson a lukewarm welcome, which gradually is replaced by taunts and humiliations. The exception is Deborah Fields (Lori Petty), for whom Johnson's arrival offers an abatement from the constant harassment she faces as a Jew and the only female deputy in the station.

Burnett effectively shows how Johnson's eagerness to be accepted by the pack influences his decision to participate in a departmental cover-up. This in turn leads to his and Field's discovery of the station's long history of widespread corruption.

"This film gave me the opportunity to examine current issues involving racism and identity," says Burnett. "It dramatizes the consequences of abandoning one's principles of justice to make things work in one's favor. The idea behind this film is to show how anyone can fall into the same trap of thinking that it doesn't hurt to fudge a bit for a greater good."

Glass Shield is Burnett's second feature to be produced and released by major industry players. Producers Carolyn Schroder, Tom Byrnes, and Chet Walker secured funding at Cannes from the French company CIBY 2000. Miramax subsequently picked up U.S. rights (one of several distribution and financing deals recently sealed between the two companies). Burnett's previous feature, the $1.7 million *To Sleep with Anger*, was produced by Cotty Chubb and Hollywood dealmaker Edward Pressman and distributed by Samuel Goldwyn.

Burnett's earlier features were decidedly smaller ventures: *Killer of Sheep* (1978), shot in 16mm for $10,000 when the director was at UCLA, never obtained a distributor nor reached far outside the festival, college, and art house circuits. Burnett coproduced his second feature, *My Brother's Wedding*, with German public television channel ZDF for about $50,000 in 1983, but it, too, received limited exposure in the U.S., having no domestic distributor. Burnett later directed the documentary *America Becoming*, produced by Dai Sil Kim-Gibson and screened on PBS.

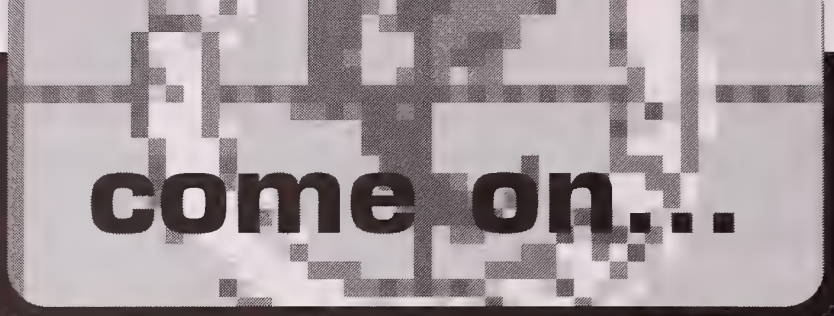
Although somewhat new to film financing, CIBY 2000 has backed other independent productions, including Jane Campion's *The Piano*, David Lynch's *Fire Walk with Me*, Pedro Almodovar's *Kika*, and Bertolucci's *Little Buddha*. With *Glass Shield*, CIBY 2000 made it clear to Burnett that, as the film's financiers, they would decide the final edit and how to market and distribute the film.

Marketing *Glass Shield* may prove to be CIBY 2000's greatest challenge to date. Many will recall the harsh criticism Goldwyn received over its poorly conceived marketing strategy for *To Sleep with Anger*. Without a track record in targeting African Americans, Goldwyn simply applied the same old rules and never reached much of the film's potential audience. For *Glass Shield*, Burnett has encouraged CIBY 2000 to hire a public relations firm that is familiar with African American concerns, such as the New York-based company KJM 3, which successfully brought large audiences to Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust*.

"Both Julie Dash and Haile Gerima have found success for their films by working with people who know how to find audiences eager to embrace their work," says Burnett. "These strategies include four-walling venues in selected cities, arranging screenings for sororities, working with Black publications, and trying grassroots organizing strategies that move the marketing design outside of the office building."

Miramax plans a release date for *Glass Shield* in 1995. In the meantime, Burnett is developing *The Tunnel*, a story he will direct about teenagers in Oakland—one Black, one white—who grow up on different sides of the track, but come to understand each other through tragedy. Jonathan Demme is currently on board as producer.

At age 50, Burnett has built a solid career working outside of the studio system. "The whole question of independence is relative," observes the director, whose has seen his budgets climb from $10,000 to the low millions. "The quality of independence depends on the expectations of the financial backers and the quality of the producers," he notes. "In general, you have to wage a war on several fronts at the same time. To stay viable, it's necessary to have different projects at different stages of development—all vying for the first green light." The result, acknowledges Burnett, is that "You find yourself preoccupied with the business and political aspects of filmmaking, rather than with being creative." Despite these reserva-



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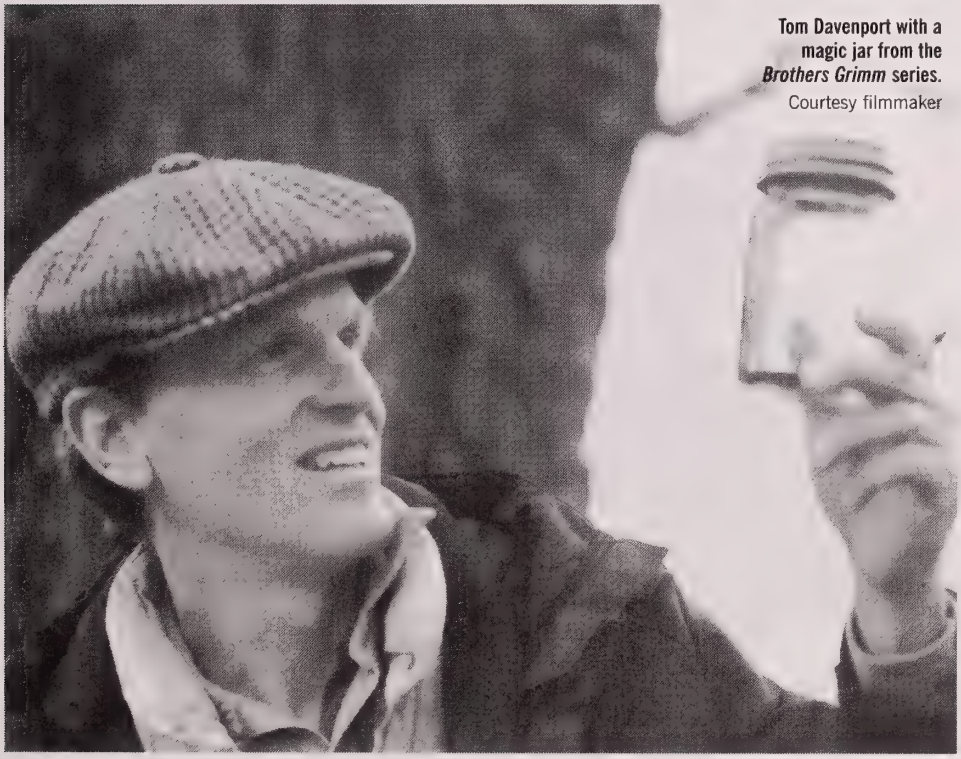
tions, Burnett finds a way to make it all work, for his creativity as a filmmaker and storyteller has never been in doubt.

O.Funmilayo Makarah is a Los Angeles based film/videomaker, installation artist, and founder of the L.A. media arts organization IN VISIBLE COLORS.

TOM DAVENPORT *producer director*

MAKING GRIMM MOVIES

BY BARBARA BLISS OSBORN



Tom Davenport with a magic jar from the *Brothers Grimm* series.
Courtesy filmmaker

Tom Davenport makes films for kids, but he's got a lot of grown-up fans. In fact, his only major grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting came after his film *The Frog King* became a lunchtime hit among the CPB secretarial staff.

His 10 short films collectively called *From the Brothers Grimm* are based on classic and American folktales. Many of them, like *Soldier Jack*, or *The Man Who Caught Death in a Sack* (in which a likeable veteran accomplishes remarkable deeds with a magic sack), are "Jack tales," Appalachian Everyman stories in which Jack doesn't always aim high or follow rules, but ultimately succeeds.

The films are recast in the rural South and Appalachia. In part, that's to save money. Although Davenport's most recent films are budgeted between $200,000 and $300,000, his early films were made for a fraction of that, and he continues to use locations, props, talent, and equipment available to him in and around his home in Delaplane, Virginia, 70 miles outside of Washington, DC.

Davenport brings authentic rural experience to his adaptations. His family moved to a farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains when he was 11. He can sniff out fake from authentic country. "Most rural films get it all wrong," he says. "They use the wrong implements. The grass is the wrong color."

Adapting the stories also permits him to put a nontraditional spin on these archetypal tales, which conventionally feature white male heroes. In some of the productions, Davenport recasts them with female heroines or, as in *Jack and the Dentist's Daughter*, places the story within the African American community.

By his own admission, Davenport is "a product of *The Whole Earth Catalog*," referring to the visionary sixties self-reliance manual. "The principle that guided me was holding on to my film assets," he says. After moving to Delaplane in 1970, he and his wife and coproducer, Mimi Davenport, decided they would distribute the films themselves. While other between-projects filmmakers waited tables and drove taxis, they hoped distribution would provide an income.

And it did. His first film based on a folktale, *Hansel and Gretel*, was made in the early seventies. "I discovered this niche," he says. "Children's films were something that all libraries collected." Library distribution was relatively simple, and using an outside distributor didn't make sense. Today, Davenport calculates that he sees five times as much revenue by self-distributing. He employs one person nearly full-time to handle the company's approximately $100,000 income. About half of this comes from video, and the remainder comes from broadcast sales.

In the early eighties, CPB gave Davenport a grant to produce additional films. The result was an eight-part series that included *Hansel and Gretel*, *Rapunzel*, *The Frog King*, *Bristlelip*, *Goose Girl*, *Bearskin*, *Jack and the Dentist's Daughter*, and *Soldier Jack*.

In exchange for CPB funding, Davenport had to fork over broadcast rights for three years. To his surprise, the PBS exposure increased his video sales. "It's not glamorous. We're not in *TV Guide*," he says, but the broadcasts made the series a known commodity. While the original PBS license expired long ago, affiliates continue to license the films. After a broadcast, the Davenport Films office gets a lot of calls from people living in teeny little towns who happened to be flipping through the dial—especially during snowstorms, he says.

Over the last 20 years, Davenport Films has grown into a cottage industry. It includes the *From the Brothers Grimm* videos, now supplemented by three National Endowment for the Humanities-funded films: *Ashpet*, *Mutzmag*, and *The Step Child*, a feature-length film based on Snow White, currently in production. In addition, the company sells several study guides, a book *From The Brother's Grimm: A Contemporary Retelling of American Folktales and Classic Stories* (which translates the films into written stories), and three making-of films, *Making Grimm Movies*.

Making Grimm Movies is the company's new media literacy series designed for grades 6 to 12 that takes viewers behind-the-scenes of the *From the Brothers Grimm* series. The three 20-minute programs are composed of production outtakes and interviews with cast and crew.

Most media literacy, Davenport says, teaches students how to "read" media without teaching them how to "write" or produce it. The three programs focus on scripting, storyboards, locations, sets and props, make up, special effects, and other aspects of production. By showing students how movies are made, Davenport says, students learn that media images are constructed. The series is designed to teach students to be discriminating viewers as well as inspiring them to make their own movies.

Twenty-five years of self-distribution has taught Davenport a thing or two about promotion, and he's bringing it to bear on *Making Grimm Movies*. This year he plans to give the three programs to all public TV stations that have licensed the folktales, convinced such largesse will help him build

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a bigger market for Davenport Films.

Barbara Bliss Osborn is a contributing editor for *The Independent* from Los Angeles and also works as a media educator.

MABLE HADDOCK
executive director
NATIONAL BLACK PROGRAMMING CONSORTIUM

BY JACQUIE JONES


Courtesy NBPC

People who know Mable Haddock are not surprised to see her show up wherever there's African American film—at impromptu screenings, conferences, parties; in New York, San Francisco, Atlanta. She's perpetually in motion, notoriously busy, elusive, powerful. But many admit they have no idea what she actually does. "Most people think all I do is write checks," Haddock says. "I wish that were true."

Haddock's sphere of influence originates in Columbus, Ohio, where she has been executive director of the National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC) virtually since its inception in 1979. Haddock recalls, "Everything was starting from scratch: no office, no chairs, no tables, nothing." The organization's mission originally honed in on the needs of Black producers in the public television world. Today, NBPC is one of the five "minority consortia" funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, annually allocating over $200,000 to independent Black productions. The coalition also sponsors a Summer Youth Media Literacy Production Program, which teaches economically disadvantaged kids to "talk back to the television," and is responsible for the highly regarded Prized Pieces film festival.

"I didn't come into this business from the independent producing community and neither did my board," says Haddock, who previously did outreach for the Canton Cultural Center for the Arts and worked as a writer in news and current affairs at the NBC affiliate in Cleveland. "So it was a natural, the focus on PBS.

"But then the independents started making noise. I think it was a miscommunication, because we were thinking they had Black Filmmakers Foundation and a number of other organizations that had their service as a primary concern," Haddock says. What eventually came out of this was the link that is now NBPC's centerpiece—its prized piece.

"Originally the idea was to have a conference. So we organized a number of workshops and forums, a banquet, receptions. Then we realized we hadn't programmed any screenings or included any producers. So originally, we kind of tacked it on." Two years later, in 1982, NBPC decided to drop the conference and keep the screenings.

"We realized that Prized Pieces gave us a chance to honor and celebrate the African American and Diaspora filmmaker," Haddock explains. "At the same time, it gave us a chance to see all the new work that was out there and to negotiate to acquire rights for PBS."

Since 1982, when the festival got its name, the number of entries has risen from approximately 40 to 160. The competition section has shown works by established makers like Julie Dash and the late Marlon Riggs, as well as by new and international directors, such as Marco Williams and John Akomfrah. Last year Prized Pieces added a nationwide tour to its schedule, travelling to Baltimore, Athens, Birmingham, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Atlanta, and Milan, Italy. A tour will also be planned after this year's festival, which will be held in Columbus from November 16 to 20.

"Building Black media institutions is really important because, fortunately or unfortunately, our values are shaped by the way we see ourselves on screen," says Haddock. "So, there has to be another image. There has to be another place to see who we are and what our experiences have been. And there have to be organizations that value, critique, and preserve images of African Americans and the African Diaspora. Organizations for promotion and distribution. We don't want to be the only one. We don't have to

be; we shouldn't be."

To that end, Haddock has become a leading advocate for producers of color within the world of public broadcasting. As Prized Pieces coordinator Jackie Tshaka puts it, "Mable has been a driving force in developing policy in PBS as it relates to African Americans in terms of how we define programming that can be considered Black."

That's where the frequent flyer miles come in. In addition to being NBPC's director, Haddock sits on the National Program Policy Committee in Public Television, an advisory oversight board that assesses "what's missing from the national program schedule," as she describes it. Haddock also is part of the Public Television Outreach Alliance, an advisory committee that looks at the issue of violence in media, and the CPB Multi-Cultural Program Fund, which includes the directors of the other four minority consortia.

But it doesn't stop there.

"Our overall mission is to promote wider dissemination of high quality African American and Diaspora programming everywhere—TV, festivals, schools, community systems, college campuses. You can't just do PBS and festivals, because then you're preaching to the converted," Haddock insists. "We go right into the community centers and churches—those places where people don't usually get independent film. The most important thing is building a literate community base of support that's going to be there for the independent producer in an ongoing way."

Haddock also believes in supporting different levels of producers. "We look for a way to encourage the emerging producer—the raw stuff that contains a germ of genius—and at the same time not abandon the veteran producer who has finally gotten to the top. That forces you to make decisions about acquisition and distribution that may sometimes not be in the best interest of the program, because you're making both expedient and political decisions. It's a difficult balance, and we're not always successful."

But every season's PBS roster indicates otherwise. This season's *Passin' It On*, John Valadez's documentary on Dhoruba Bin Wahad and the Black Panther movement, is one of many programs NBPC helped get on the air. There's also Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust*, Marlon Riggs' *Tongues Untied*, Kathe Sandler's *A Question of Color*, WTVS and NBPC's *The State of Black America*, Villion Films and NBPC's *Mandela*. The list goes on.

After looking back over the past 14 years, Haddock laughs, acknowledging, "My god, I guess we're becoming an institution. That's one of my dreams—to be more than just an organization."

Jacquie Jones is a critic of Black film and popular culture.

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By Brian Edgar

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Scheduling and Budgeting Software

Rather than grabbing a calculator when navigating the treacherous waters of production budgets and scheduling, you can now reach for your mouse instead. Among the growing number of computer programs developed specifically for mediamakers are several products in the areas of budgeting and scheduling. This article looks at some of the most widely used programs. The software company Screenplay Systems, best known for its Scriptor screenplay formatting software, has budgeting and scheduling programs for both Macintoshs and PCs—Movie Magic Budgeting and Movie Magic Scheduling/Breakdown—while the software company MacToolkit offers Mac users its Production Budgeter and Professional Scheduler.

Movie Magic Budgeting

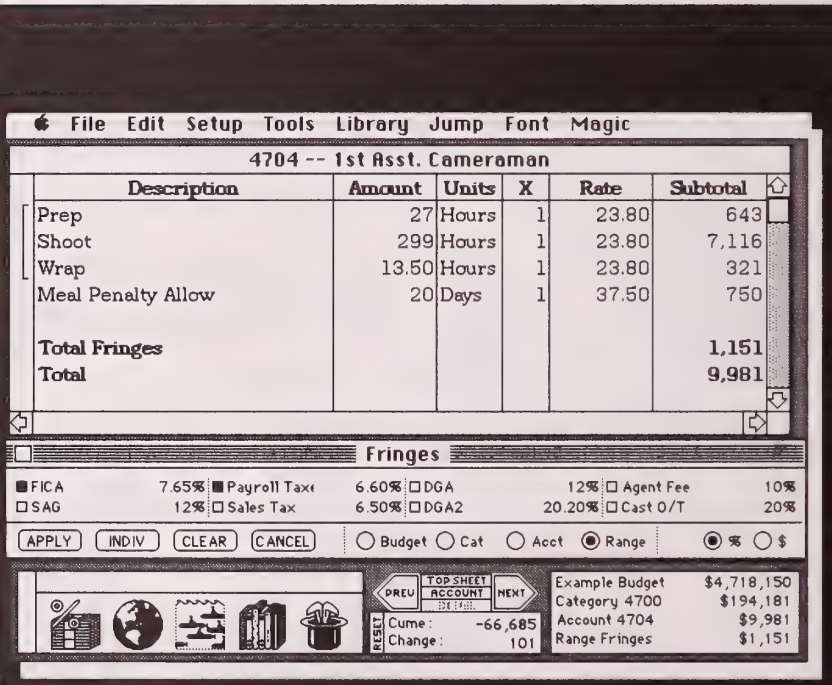
Movie Magic Budgeting is a flexible, innovative, and fast program that will turn notebooks of production data into a clean professional budget. Used by virtually all the major studios and considered a standard for computerized budgeting, Movie Magic Budgeting combines sophisticated features with an almost intuitive ease of use.

The program works on three levels: A Topsheet contains all of your categories (major accounts) and budget totals. The Account level breaks these categories down into specific accounts; for example, talent is divided into talent/actors, casting director, extras, stand-ins, and so on. Meanwhile, specific line items are displayed at the Details level. It is here that all monies are entered, and every entry made is instantly carried into the other levels of the budget.

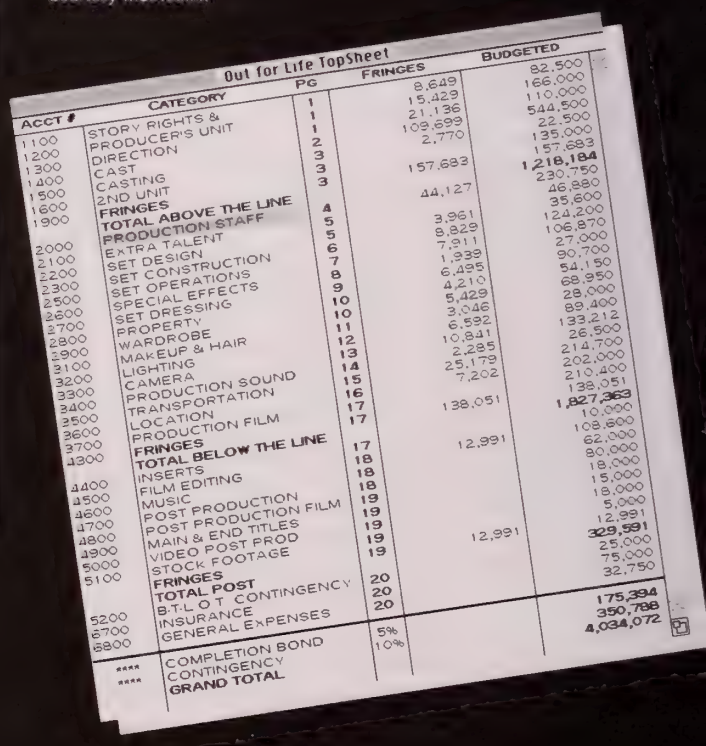
Each separate account can carry up to 300 lines of detail (more than enough to accommodate any independent production). Account, category, and full budget totals—which are on-screen at all times—can be changed easily, and the entire budget is automatically recalculated as changes are entered.

One important feature is the Globals option, which allows you to create budget variables within a number of different areas simultaneously. For example, if you need to add an extra day to your production shoot, making this change using Setup Globals results in an automatic adjustment throughout the budget. Another nice feature is Fringes. Fringes are percentages that relate to accounts and cover areas like benefits and taxes. Even though most independents would rather not think about unions, Fringes allows a producer to enter important information in a number of effective ways, from individual lines of detail to budget totals.

If you need to create multiple versions of a project budget, Movie Magic Budgeting provides a versatile Subgroups feature. This allows you to produce one budget that includes your sought-after presale or six-figure grant, another that's more realistically scaled down, still another that's a shoe-string, no-budget budget, and so on. You



Budgeting Account Details screen from Movie Magic Budgeting
Courtesy



Line Item Detail screen from MacToolkit's Production Budgeter
Courtesy MacToolkit

can also use Subgroups to compare the cost of a New York location shoot with one in Hoboken. This is a particularly good feature, as it enables a production manager or producer to consider the hard costs of any number of options and scenarios.

Movie Magic Budgeting will also calculate foreign currency exchanges, allowing you to write the budget in one currency, then print it out in any currency entered into the program, from yen to rupees. Other features include a Scheduling/Breakdown interface, which can create cast, set, and prop lists with rates and days; a Library feature that serves as a ratebook database; and over 30 standard budget forms.

Movie Magic Budgeting is compatible with a number of production accounting software programs and is available in both Mac and IBM/PC (MS-DOS) versions. The program lists for $595 and is available from Screenplay Systems.

Production Budgeter

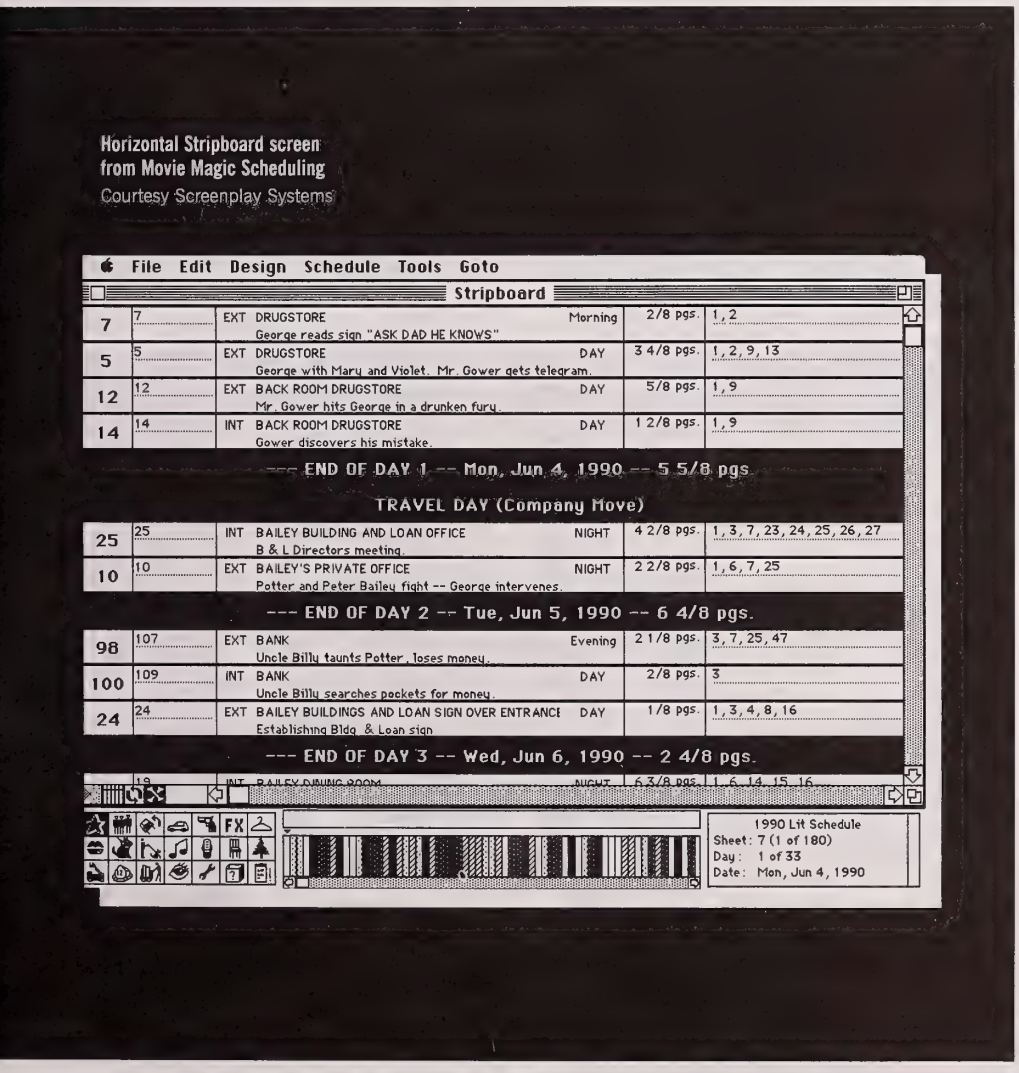
MacToolkit, which produces the fine script formatting program Final Draft, offers a budgeting software program called Production Budgeter. Like Movie Magic Budgeting, this program is based on a three-tiered system: The Topsheet lists the categories and totals for the entire budget. Budget Category Detail, reached by selecting a detail from the Topsheet, opens a window containing the breakdown of each category. And Line Item Detail, predictably, itemizes each line item in detail. Here is where the specific money amounts, rates, and production times are entered. The program then automatically inputs these amounts in the Category Detail and Topsheet levels as subtotals and totals.

Each level of the budget can hold as many lines of detail as you need; selecting ADD or INSERT from the Command menu creates a new line anywhere in the program.

A Budget Forms disk contains Account Charts used by 16 major film companies and studios, with future additions available free of charge. If you shy away from boiler-plate forms, Production Budgeter will let you customize your account categories and numbering system. Lines and sections can be cut and pasted and information saved in a Budget Libraries resource for later use (or future budgets).

Specific details like fringes, taxes, foreign currency, and contingency percentages are all acces-

Horizontal Stripboard screen from Movie Magic Scheduling
Courtesy Screenplay Systems



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sible via the Options menu. When any changes or additions are made, the program adjusts the budget accordingly and returns you to your working area. Production Budgeter's Globals feature allows you to make fast changes throughout the budget and create alternate "What if?" versions (What if we shoot in Seattle rather than San Francisco?).

MacToolkit's Production Budgeter is a more basic nuts-and-bolts program than Screenplay System's Movie Magic. But at $375, it is also significantly less expensive and a good choice if you are watching your own budget.

Movie Magic Scheduling/Breakdown

Once you've got your budget in place, the next challenge is to put everything into the most effective breakdown and schedule for shooting. Screenplay System's Movie Magic Scheduling/Breakdown is a sophisticated yet easy-to-use program that will break down and organize a screenplay into a professional shooting schedule. It provides 32 standard breakdown categories, from Cast and Set to Script Day and Props. These categories can be modified, or you can create your own. This translates into a vast palette for the producer who is putting together a detailed schedule.

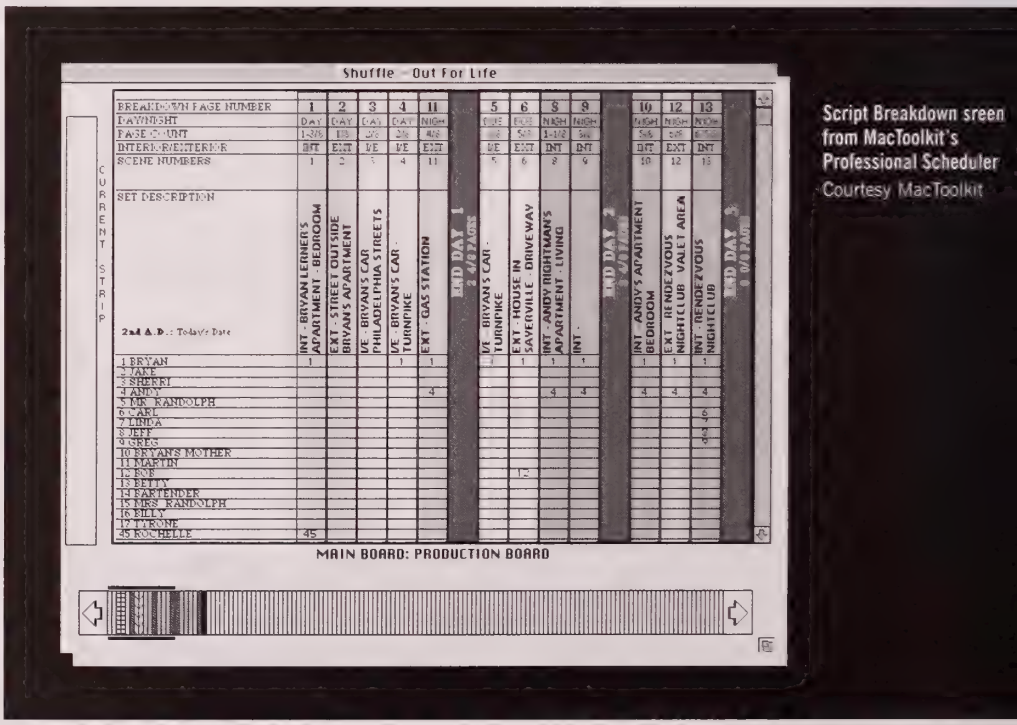
If you formatted your script using Screenplay System's Scriptor program, you can automatically integrate the key elements—scene numbers, Int/Ext, Day/Night, page counts, etc.—directly into the breakdown. This script-to-schedule interface is an excellent feature and can save the producer countless hours by smoothly building breakdown sheets and cast list. (With Scriptor 4.0, the speaking cast can also be integrated.)

Movie Magic Scheduling/Breakdown lets you conform and print out professional strip boards in any number of layouts and fonts. A lot of essential strip information can be rendered while maintaining readability, and a small feature film can fit onto Screenplay System's 11-inch production boards. The program employs a handy Sort/Selection command to sort and move strips as needed. Schedules can be printed in an endless variety of ways, sorted by shooting days, scene numbers, sets, cast, or nearly 50 other orientations.

Movie Magic Scheduling/Breakdown also provides a range of options for printing out reports. Over a dozen standard report formats are available, such as Shooting Schedule, Breakdown Sheet, Mini-Strip Board, Call Sheets, and Printed Strip Boards. The layouts can be customized, graphics and pictures can be integrated, and a reduced-size preview lets you view everything before printing.

Other features include a Storyboard, in which PICT, MacPaint, and PCX (DOS format) pictures can be added to the breakdown sheets; a schedule-to-budget interface; and a Multiple Board Orders option that gives you the flexibility to produce different versions of a schedule. In addition, the entire production can be tracked using the program's powerful database. The tutorial and reference manuals for this software add up to a small phone directory, but they are written in a user-friendly style with many helpful graphics.

Movie Magic Scheduling/Breakdown is available for both Mac and IBM/PC (MS-DOS), with full interconnectivity between the two environments. The program is available from Screenplay Systems for $695.



Script Breakdown sreen from MacToolkit's Professional Scheduler
Courtesy MacToolkit

Professional Scheduler

MacToolkit's Professional Scheduler is an easy-to-use program that can produce breakdown sheets and create production board strips and shooting schedules, all customized to your needs.

The Options menu provides you with quick access to the key components of Professional Scheduler. A ListMaker function serves as the foundation for MacToolkit's Professional Scheduler by maintaining lists of all items appearing on the breakdown sheet. This provides a detailed account of the entire production, with each breakdown area—Int/Ext, Day/Night, Sets, Props, etc.—given its own ListMaker. From here, the program takes the data you enter in the breakdown and automatically creates the board strips and related reports. When a change is made to a breakdown sheet, this is reflected in every other part of the schedule. The breakdown sheets use windows for entering information; each window can be revised, moved, or deleted, and you can add your own for a customized version.

Professional Scheduler has a function called the Shuffle, which acts as an electronic production board. Since the board strips have already been created from the breakdown, you can move right to the process of rearranging the strips (hence, the shuffle) until they are in a logical shooting order. Within the on-screen representation of the full board (which can only be partially viewed), a miniature version, or Miniboard, exists as a tiny overview of the entire board.

The Design-a-Form feature allows you to print out six different types of reports—Breakdown, Cast List, Crew List, "Day Out of Days," ListMaker, and Callsheet. It also provides standard industry report templates which can be used, modified, or replaced with your own. Graphics, such as a production company logo, can also be pasted into the Design-a-Form.

Other feature includes an Auto-Entry function in the ListMaker, which recognizes items you may have left out in a given breakdown area; individualized item tracking; a handy Calendar, where selected dates appear in all relevant reports and printouts; and picture importing (with files in either MacPaint or PICT).

Professional Scheduler is a Macintosh-specific program which MacToolkit sells for $425. MacToolkit also offers both its programs—the Budgeter and Scheduler—for $695: a savings of $100 which, for the struggling independent producer, could be a further incentive.

Brian Edgar is an independent filmmaker and writer based in New York.

Screenplay Systems, 150 East Olive Ave., ste. 203, Burbank, CA 91502; (818) 843-6557; fax: (818) 843-8364; MacToolkit, 1234 6th St., ste. 204, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 395-4242; fax: (310) 393-7747.

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By Luke Hones

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A few months ago, after the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention, I asked a senior Sony engineer about possible online editing systems.

"Get an SGI Onyx," he replied. "You can do color correction, editing, effects, everything. It's an online suite in a box."

Engineers nowadays always tell you to get a nonlinear system, but never what tape format to get. "Sounds great," I said, "but how do I get video in and out of it?"

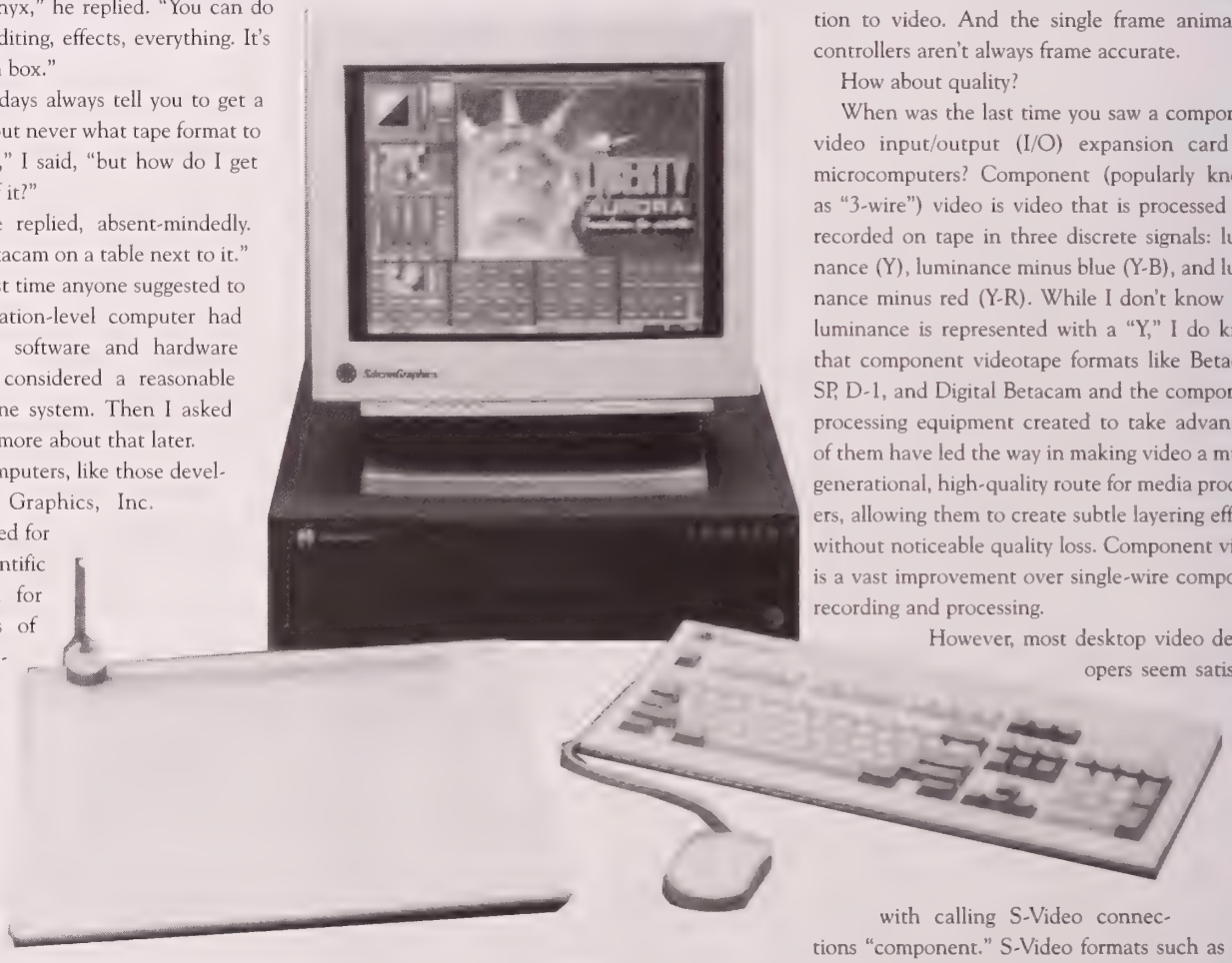
"Oh, yeah," he replied, absent-mindedly. "Stick a Digital Betacam on a table next to it."

This was the first time anyone suggested to me that a workstation-level computer had developed enough software and hardware peripherals to be considered a reasonable choice for an online system. Then I asked him the price, but more about that later.

Workstation computers, like those developed by Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI), were designed for data-intensive scientific research and sell for tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars. These are not the Macs, PCs, and Amigas familiar to most video producers. While these less expensive microcomputers serve as the hosts for most desktop video applications, they by their nature have limited video uses.

Microcomputers are that class of computers built and marketed as personal computers. Macintoshes, PCs, and Amigas are the microcomputer platforms that serve as single-user systems in general business offices or at home. They all have a built in capability to print documents or, with a modem or computer network card installed, communicate with other computers. Almost all microcomputers have at least one standard internal card slot for expansion. These expansion slots have spawned an entire industry of expansion cards that add functionality to computers. All microcomputer platforms allow you to add more hard drives, modem and fax capabilities, scanners, and CD-ROM players. There are thousands of other customizations microcomputer owners can achieve with expansion cards.

Many desktop video systems exist that use (through special expansion cards) a microcomputer as a linear replacement for traditional video editing tools. Facilities that once would use a CMX controller now have a Sundance System on a Mac or EditMaster on the PC or Amilink on an Amiga. Grass Valley Switchers and Ampex ADOs have been replaced with Video Toasters. Other



Silicon Graphics, Inc.'s workstations, designed for data-intensive scientific research, allow video editors to do color correction, editing, and effects in a flash.
Courtesy SGI

names that peppered the video industry for almost 20 years—Tektronix, Chyron, Soundcraft, and Dubner—are being underbid by upstarts like Digital Processing Systems, NewTek, Digidesign, and Adobe.

Many of the nonlinear, hard disk-based editing systems use a microcomputer as the host as well. Avids, ImMixs, and Quicktime systems like Adobe Premiere use Macintoshes. D/Vision, EMC, and Fast Video Machine use PCs. Reading these product names that have become familiar to us over the last couple of years, you can tell the linear and nonlinear video systems that revolutionized the video industry are based on microcomputers—systems designed from the outset to be relatively inexpensive, reasonably standardized, and with features that are easy to customize and expand. What more could an independent mediamaker ask for?

How about speed?

Even the most dogmatic apologists for Quicktime, Avid, and ImMix will admit that the rendering time is tedious. 3-D animation design and output is "getting faster." Still, it is not unusual to take a full weekend to transfer a few seconds of animation to video. And the single frame animation controllers aren't always frame accurate.

How about quality?

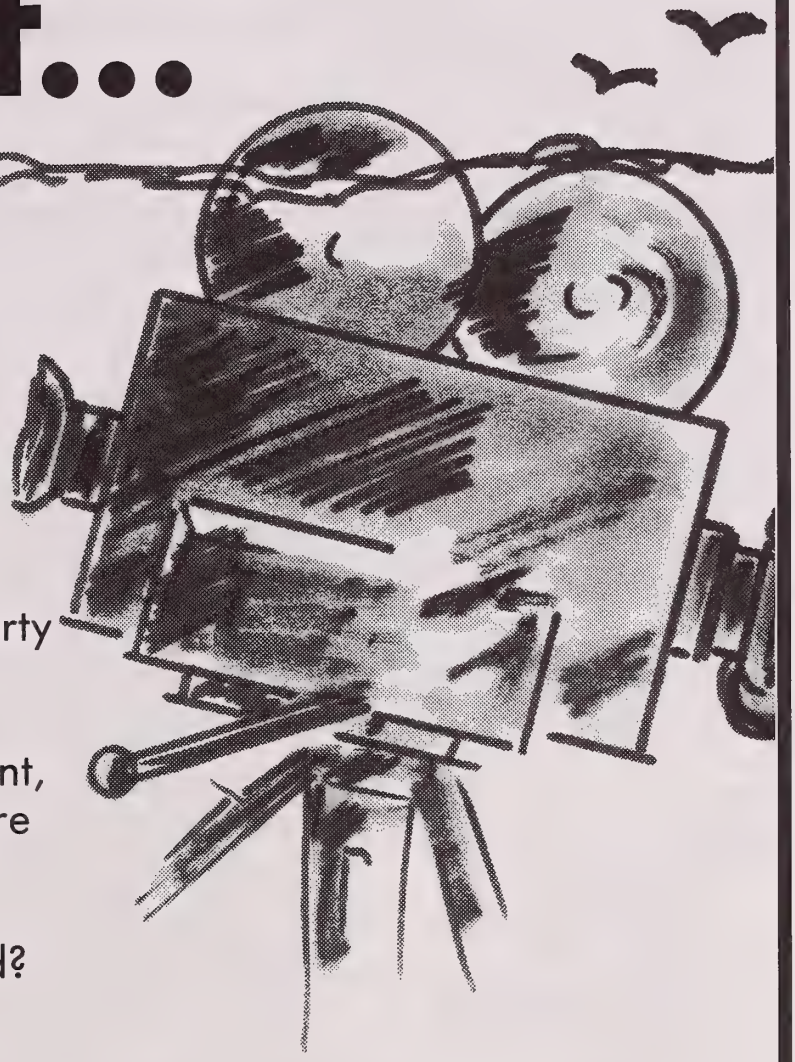
When was the last time you saw a component video input/output (I/O) expansion card for microcomputers? Component (popularly known as "3-wire") video is video that is processed and recorded on tape in three discrete signals: luminance (Y), luminance minus blue (Y-B), and luminance minus red (Y-R). While I don't know why luminance is represented with a "Y," I do know that component videotape formats like Betacam SP, D-1, and Digital Betacam and the component processing equipment created to take advantage of them have led the way in making video a multigenerational, high-quality route for media producers, allowing them to create subtle layering effects without noticeable quality loss. Component video is a vast improvement over single-wire composite recording and processing.

However, most desktop video developers seem satisfied with calling S-Video connections "component." S-Video formats such as Hi8 and S-VHS are recorded on tape in the same way composite formats are, but, for signal processing, S-Video cables separate video into luminance (Y) and chrominance (C). While this scheme improves upon composite video processing, it cannot be compared to the more comprehensive solution that component video offers.

The few component I/O cards that exist, like the Video Explorer, the Macintosh expansion card from Intelligent Resources, are more expensive than the computer that houses it.

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Many computer developers are learning a lot about film and video production from the facilities and producers who buy their desktop video tools. It is a common complaint among desktop video pioneers that they feel like guinea pigs. When Quicktime was first introduced, a few developers told interested producers that their systems did not support time code, but then, who needs time code now that there is Quicktime? The next version of their system included time code support.

Time code is not the only support problem. Many systems, even the more expensive ones, don't create a trustworthy edit decision list (EDL). Since the quality of these systems will only meet the needs of an offline rough cut, it is essential that they produce an EDL on a floppy disk that is readable by an industry standard online computer (a CMX or a GVG). If an offline system produces a clean EDL, there is a better chance that the online editing session will go smoothly. If the list does not transfer correctly, your offline time has been wasted, and you run the risk of wasting expensive online time trying to sort through a hopeless jumble.

Is this to say that microcomputer-based systems are never suitable for independent productions? Far from it. Many producers have had very good experiences with all of these tools. For instance, the Video Toaster has opened up a creative world to numerous producers who, just three years ago, could only afford to edit their work on a cuts-only offline system. Nonlinear systems such as Avid and Adobe Premiere have finally given filmmakers an editing method with the nonlinear advantages of film and the accessibility of video. All of these systems are improving and becoming more media-savvy with each new version.

However, just as Hi8 and S-VHS are not qualitative replacements for film or Betacam SP, but pragmatic and inexpensive alternatives, so microcomputer-based systems are not replacements for workstation-based systems. In the film/video industry, the leading workstations are products of Silicon Graphics, Inc.

UNLIKE MICROCOMPUTERS, WORKSTATION COMPUTERS are not designed for home or general business applications. From the ground up they were intended to work on the complex technical problems facing scientists and engineers in fields such as aerospace, medicine, and genetics. The design of these systems is significantly different from microcomputers, even microcomputers like the PowerPC. Some of those differences are:

Multiple Central Processing Units (CPU): Microcomputers, by design, use single CPUs. Workstations are designed with the option to expand to multiple CPUs, which means that multiple complex tasks can be carried out by the same computer, or all the CPUs can be turned loose on a hairy brainteaser. To process D-1 (uncom-

pressed, component digital) video in real time, the SGI Onyx uses a minimum of 8 CPUs.

Faster system architecture: Microcomputer designs, regardless of how fast the processor is, are often based on the earliest versions of a particular model. The performance of Apple's PowerPC as a video tool is limited by the use of Apple's Nubus '90 architecture, a design dating back to a 1990 design update of the now ancient Mac II standard. Regardless of how fast the CPU is, the computer is only as fast as its slowest component. Microcomputers, at their fastest, are 32 bit systems. SGI's Indy, the least expensive workstation, has a 64 bit CPU and 64 bit system architecture.

Big, fast, reliable disk systems: Disk arrays, which are now appearing on some microcomputer systems, are common on workstations. Disk arrays, also known as RAIDs (Redundant Arrays of Inexpensive Disks), gang multiple disks together into what appears on your computer screen as a single drive. These arrays provide the user with multiple gigabytes (1 gigabyte=1,000 floppy disks). These storage devices are very fast because, like multiple processors, the multiple drives can increase the amount of simultaneous work being accomplished. Many of these arrays are also designed with some redundancy of data, so if one disk drive fails no data or time will be lost.

Built-in networking: And I don't mean printer sharing. The Indy, SGI's low-cost "desktop" solution, comes with a color camera positioned on top of the monitor. With this camera a user can teleconference with another Indy user. With additional software, these two collaborators can share a sketchpad on their monitors, exchanging ideas and recording them on a common document. This echoes a familiar model for future media facilities, where a number of workstations are networked together working on a common project. Beyond the confines of a single facility, workstation networking has the potential of linking a number of facilities in collaboration.

Cool hardware and software: On a visit to SGI's facility down in Mountain View, California, I saw a 360 degree scanner. While a visitor sat in a chair, a scanner's red laser traced around her head. Immediately a 3-D rendition of her head appeared on the Indigo2 screen. In real time we rotated her head's image, looking at her profile, her full face, under her chin. It was unbelievable—I know Industrial Light and Magic worked with these types of tools for *Terminator 2*, et al., but I didn't expect to see it on a system under $100,000. On SGI's Onyx, video images were shaped and stretched and twisted at will. Virtual landscapes, with towns, trees, and mountains, were there for us to cruise through in real time. 3-D animation, which has always seemed like a huge waste of time on microcomputers, is an exciting creative experience on an SGI workstation.

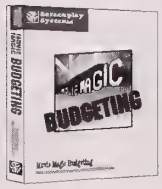
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developments in video are beginning to offer software and hardware on SGI platforms. CMX, Grass Valley Group, Aurora, Chyron, DiaQuest, and Wavefront have all released products for SGI. Early video developers on the SGI platform are Discrete Logic's Flame and Flint visual effects software, SoftImage Digital Studio tools and Eddie editing system, and Xaos Tools Pandemonium. The bottom line with all these companies is that, along with taking us to a new level of enlightenment, their tools descended from those we use in today's editing suites.

High-end media I/O: With the Galileo Video expansion card, you can input and output composite, S-Video, 3-wire component and, optionally, D-1 digital component. You can use this to output to D-1 or a digital disk recorder. Imagine using an SGI Onyx (real time processing of D-1, remember), a Digital Betacam with preread, and/or a digital disk recorder.

Not good enough? How about this: With a film recorder you can output to film. Using backup devices like Exebyte drives, you can use a service bureau that has film output (RFX of Hollywood, San Rafael is such a place). This service is already being provided for feature motion pictures and theme parks. The SGI's ability to handle this level of data has challenged Quantel's supremacy in the high-end imaging workstation market. Many industry professionals prefer SGI's open system, with its multiple developers.

So how much does this cost? The Indy, configured for video work, starts at about $35,000, with the Indigo2 starting around $50,000. Software can cost from $1,200 to $150,000 or more. An Onyx configured for D-1 with software, etc., is probably going to cost around $500,000. As for the 360 degree scanner—I wasn't brave enough to ask.

These systems are very expensive. So why should independent producers be interested in them? First, this is probably where online editing is going. While it is important that independent producers and media arts centers take advantage of cost effective solutions like Video Toasters and Quicktime editing systems, it would be a mistake to make Video Toaster suites the independent producer ghetto. The work done by independents demands the best possible tools. Second, the cost of these high-end workstations is in line with the cost of online editing systems. These systems were out of reach to all of us just two years ago.

The two hottest companies at NAB this year were computer companies: SGI and Hewlett Packard (which introduced a 9-gigabyte drive). The trend first suggested by desktop video microcomputers has now evolved to include systems powerful enough to handle film-quality moving images. The last three years in video have been very exciting. The next three will be better.

Luke Hones is director of research and development at the Bay Area Video Coalition.



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Play chopsticks for me: Ortiz performs a Destructionist piano concert in 1967.
All photos courtesy filmmaker

THE AXEMAN COMETH

Raphael Ortiz's Avant-Garde Alchemy Moves into the Digital Age

By Scott MacDonald

One of the distinctive dimensions of the current moment in independent media is the intersection of two different cultural projects. There's the ongoing development of that area of cinema and video known as "avant-garde" or "experimental," and the flowering of ethnically-based media work. While these projects have a good bit in common—both, for example, critique conventional film and television—mediamakers in these two areas often evince as much suspicion of each other as camaraderie.

Those familiar with the long history of the avant-garde are troubled by the fact that media artists working out of an ethnic context often seem unaware of the broad range of experimentation that has already been explored. What is trumpeted as "new" seems just another instance of an approach that's become virtually traditional. On the other hand, those using media to address particular ethnic heritages recognize that, whatever traditions of experimentation have been developed by the avant-garde, an engagement with issues of race and ethnicity is not one of them. Indeed, from an ethnic standpoint the avant-garde has not been noticeably more open or aware than mainstream film, a point dramatized by the fact that even major contributions to American avant-garde cinema by African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos have often been ignored by avant-garde historians.



The Pope blessing the bomb in *Newsreel* (1958).

Raphael Montanez Ortiz is a case in point. Ortiz has been making notable contributions to American film culture since the late fifties, though he is better known for his "Destructionist" performances and assemblages and for his role in establishing New York's El Museo del Barrio in 1969. Ortiz's engagement with his other art activities (and his complex, largely Hispanic heritage) has kept him away from the major institutions devoted to avant-garde film, while his wildly experimental approach tends to frustrate those who prefer to bear witness to marginalized ethnic heritages in simple, direct, "realistic" ways. For me, his work has come to be a symbol of the potentially productive relationship between two separate attempts to critique contemporary mass media culture.

In 1958—the same year Bruce Conner made *A Movie*—Ortiz was also buying small-gauge film footage in local stores and reediting this material. But unlike Conner and other avant-gardists, Ortiz placed ritual at the center of his collage process. The great-grandson of a full-blooded Yaqui, Ortiz used a tomahawk to chop up the cine-artifacts of his forbearers' oppressors—Westerns and newsreels. The film fragments were placed in a medicine bag, which then became a rattle, and finally the film shards were removed and randomly edited into such works as *Cowboy and "Indian" Film* and *Newsreel*. The finished films are less entertainments than indices of the "Destructionist" process that produced them.

More recently, Ortiz has turned to computers and other electronic technologies to "chop up" film artifacts. In 1985, he began using laser disks and an Apple computer, along with a Deltalab Effectron II sound effects generator and a video deck. With these, he now deconstructs and reconstructs excerpts from classic cinema that encapsulate European-American readings of Western history, transforming them into visually arresting, conceptually revealing videotapes. He has made dozens of these "digital/laser/videos," as he calls them, almost any of which can serve as an introduction to his work, though I particularly recommend *The Kiss* (1985; recycling Robert Rossen's *Body and Soul*), *Dance Number One* (1985; using *Citizen Kane*), and *My Father's Dead* (1991; combining excerpts from three films).

An exhibition of Ortiz's work, curated by Chon Noriega, will be shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art during its 1994/95 exhibition season. Ortiz's media works will also be in the Whitney Biennial this fall.

MacDonald: You've worked as an artist in various ways, periodically returning to film. What were your earliest film experiments?

Ortiz: When I was about nine years old, I had one of those Lone Ranger rings that you could look at Lone Ranger film strips with. I used to belong to this gang—all kids belong to some sort of gang, a sandlot gang or whatever—and we used to meet in the basement of a church, where some of us were altar boys. A couple of the guys were really mischievous, delinquent types, and they came in one night with a box full of films that they said they'd found in the backyard of a photography studio. In the box were all these 8mm porno films. And guess what? The 8mm films fit into the Lone Ranger ring perfectly. So I spent hours sliding them through the ring, looking at them frame-by-frame. I spent weeks and weeks piecing together each story. I guess that was the beginning of my working frame-by-frame.

And I remember Coney Island arcades. You put in the nickel, you turned the crank, and all these single frames became a movie. I spent a lot of time looking at that effect. I was really turned on by it. I think I was a filmmaker in a past life or something. So, all of that came together with my desire to draw and paint, and led finally to some photography and film courses at Pratt in the mid-fifties.

MacDonald: Were you at Pratt when you made *Cowboy and "Indian" Film* (1958)?

Ortiz: No, I was enrolled in the Architectural Program at Pratt from January 1955, and my experiments in art dominated my time. It was also the time that I began exploring the visionary culture of my Yaqui grandfather in peyote rituals. Peyote was legal then.

My cum had dropped below 2.0 when I left Pratt in January 1957. I enrolled in art courses at the Art Students League and the Brooklyn Museum Art School. It was during a number of peyote rituals in 1956 that my visions connected up with cowboy and "Indian" movies, which led to *Cowboy and "Indian" Film* and many others beginning in 1956. Peyote ritual visions also led to *Henny Penny: The Sky Is Falling* (completed in 1958). When I returned to Pratt in 1960, I submitted these works for credit and received it.

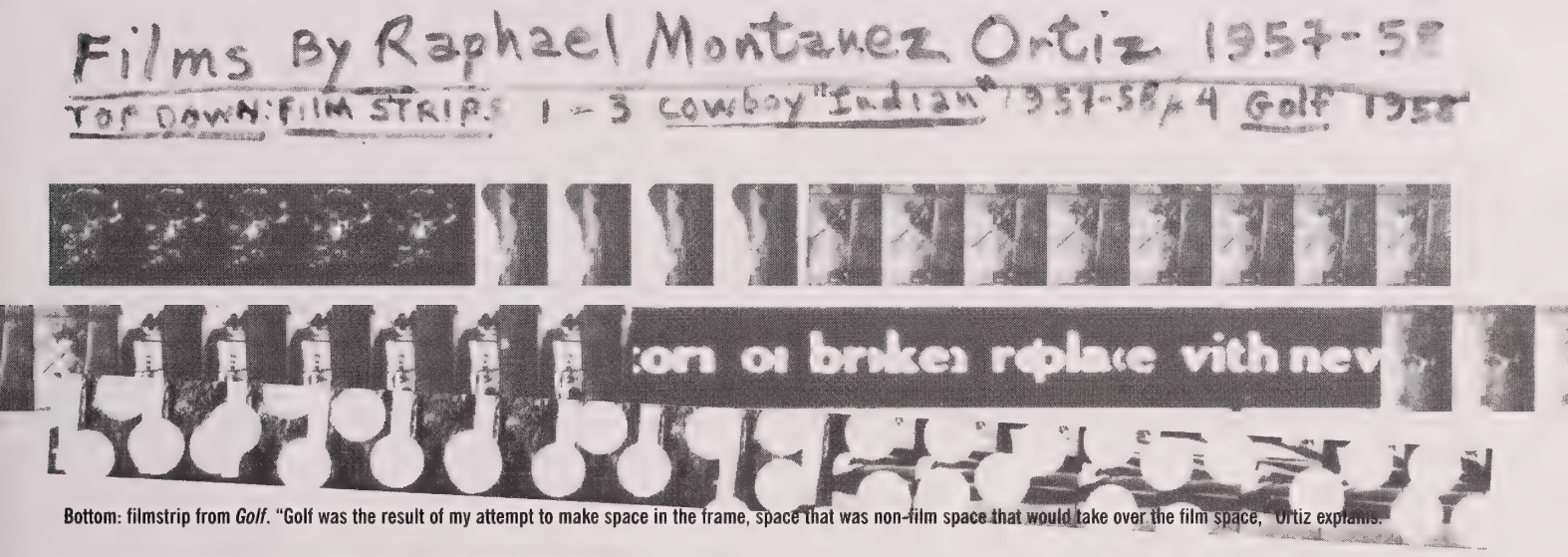
For me in those years, the Yaqui peyote ritual was the means to finally have the psychic, shamanic, cultural-root resources to make film. I began in art as an underclass kid with no resources for anything beyond working at the Educational Alliance and the Henry Street Settlement, with whatever was available there in terms of art. I took photography and a film workshop at the Alliance. I learned how to play the piano a little down at the Settlement, and how to shoot pool, play the harmonica, and, of course, how to play basketball. And I was always interested in theater.

So I had all those interests in kinetic kinds of performance by the time I got to Pratt. Making films seemed a natural part of my involvement in art. Also, it was the time I was getting to know what my grandfather was culturally all about and to understand the North American indigenous connection in my family roots.

My grandfather is half Yaqui. There was this whole indigenous side of our family that we didn't talk too much about. But as I did the research, I found out *his* father was Irish, and his mother was full-blooded Yaqui. I developed a romantic connection with all that. At the same time, I was becoming familiar with the Western art tradition and reactions against it from within, reactions like Dada.

There were cowboy and Indian movies all over the place in those years. Remember? If it wasn't Cochise, it was some Comanche uprising and the Cavalry coming to the rescue. I went through the usual stage of cheering the Cavalry. And one day I'm sitting there, thinking, "What am I doing cheering the Cavalry?!" There was a whole cultural revolution going on: things were happening in the Afro-American community, in the Hispanic community, and in the indigenous community. I felt connected with all of it.

This spilled over into whatever aesthetic concerns I had as a student. I was reading philosophy and psychology, looking into anthropology, and exploring my identity in the process. I made the link between Dada and the whole shift out of the more formalist kind of art that had been happening in the Western culture, and I looped that into visionary indigenous ritual. And that relationship between Dada and ritual came to bear on my problem-solving as an artist.



Bottom: filmstrip from *Golf*. "Golf was the result of my attempt to make space in the frame, space that was non-film space that would take over the film space," Ortiz explains.

First, I worked with objects. I did a whole series of pieces, using shoes, flower pots, anything I got my hands on that struck a visceral chord in its iconic meaning. I ritualized, deconstructed, sacrificed, released the spirit from these things revealing the id of their meaning. It was all a wonderful experiment. I was experiencing my roots in a process that was entirely relevant to my life.

I had always been fascinated with ritual and its sacred context—for a while at the same time that I was an altar boy in, first, the Catholic, and then the High Episcopal Church. I was the Shabbat boy at the local temple, lighting lights and watching the rabbis during the high holy days—so it was easy for me to look for the sacred context in art.

MacDonald: Is *Cowboy and "Indian" Film* one of a series of films? How much filmmaking were you doing?

Ortiz: That was one of the few films I "finished," that is, made a completed work of mine from another film. But there were about 16 films that I sacrificed, released the spirits from, usually without ending up with a new "finished" work.

MacDonald: The film recycled in *Cowboy and "Indian" Film* is *Winchester '73* (1950, directed by Anthony Mann), right?

Ortiz: Yes, with Jimmy Stewart. Little 8mm and 16mm films were for sale in tourist shops. I'd wander around these shops and see what I wanted to purge. I found a number of cowboy and Indian films, a number of touristy films, and some old newsreels.

MacDonald: Did you consciously choose the particular newsreel you use in *Newsreel* or would any newsreel have done as well?

Ortiz: I was interested in the fact that that newsreel included footage of the Nuremberg trials, of the Pope, of war and death. It allowed me to have the Pope blessing the bomb, to comment on the Catholic collaboration with the Nazis. For me, making the film was a way to purge all this, to release the good from the evil. I was always looking for a ritual way of moving into these self-contained structures that protected the lies or sins. That's what drove me. I would chop a film up with my tomahawk and put it into a medicine bag. I would shake it and shake it, and for me the bag would become a rattle, and I would chant with it. I was always trying to find some process, some activity, that would connect what I was doing with the indigenous sacred. I was imitating indigenous ritual to find my place in it. When I had chanted long enough and felt comfortable with my ritual, *then* I would reach into the medicine bag, pull out pieces of chopped-up film, and randomly splice them together.

MacDonald: You later became famous for attacking things with an axe. Were these films your first chopping performances?

Ortiz: Yes. Then in 1962 I moved on to the piano, the symbol of Eurocentric cultural authority. It was there, in an empty lot near Pratt Institute, where I did my Ritual "Burn" pieces. The piano was an important iconic object for me. Sound is an important part of indigenous ritual, and the drumming sounds of the pianos that resonated when I chopped them apart were an expansion of their voice in sacrifice, so to speak. For at least a moment they had an indigenous voice.

MacDonald: Seeing several decades of your work in a short period of time, I can see a lot of continuity. Yesterday when looking at *Henny Penny: The Sky Is Falling*, I was thinking that after the chickens' throats are cut

and they're thrown into the funnels to be bled, their twitching suggests both the spasms of people undergoing past life regression in *Past Life Regression* (1979) and the "spasms" you create in excerpts from classic films in the digital/laser/videos.

Ortiz: Yes! That's a clinging to life, a positive reflex, like a heartbeat.

MacDonald: Spasm (in the literal and metaphoric sense) is what most behavior training in Western culture tries to control or eliminate. The whole culture works together to create this appearance that everything is working smoothly. Conventional film reflects this desire for stylistic regularity or smoothness, for a clear and effective continuity.

Ortiz: You know, a lot of the lighting that we use *seems* to be a constant flow of radiation. But in fact, it has a flicker, a pulse. My work tries to get at the pulse of life that we've lost sight of. I want to get in tune with it again, to reveal it. I was really excited when this surfaced in me. It was a revelation, like discovering the heartbeat and that the blood circulated. I became interested in getting out of the passivity of perception that I felt in myself and then to bring my revelation to others.

MacDonald: Who saw your early films?

Ortiz: I heard about this place on Avenue B, way over in the East Village, a basement where Jonas Mekas was showing experimental films. I took my films there and showed them. I met Jonas and a whole group of crazy filmmakers. Andy Warhol is the only one I remember.

MacDonald: Speaking of crazy artists, at the 1966 Destruction in Art Symposium in London, you met Otto Muhl, Herman Nitsch, and the other Viennese "Destructionists." How did you come to be at that conference?

Ortiz: I was there, as was Al Hanson—we were the American contingent. Al and I had gone to school together at Pratt. Al called from Europe and said, "Hey, they're doing this thing over in London. It's right up your alley: you know, you're always running around destroying something, dancing around something while it's burning... You should come to London." So I called Gustav Metzger, the organizer. I told him about my work, and he said by all means come. I had the typical aggressive American attitude about going to England. You know, when Bob Dylan went to England, he seemed real tough, New York tough. And the English folk singers were blown away. I had this fantasy that I'd go to London and just blow them away, the way he did.

I arrived early and worked pretty closely with Metzger, doing the PR part of the conference. I helped design events that would be news, to draw attention to the Symposium. For my first event, I bought a chair at one of those men's clubs where men go to read the newspaper. I planned to arrive and when somebody was sitting in the chair, I'd tell them to get off the chair: it was *my* chair. I'd start an argument with the chair, and I'd battle with it and destroy it right there in the club. Then I'd carry the chair down to the place where we were exhibiting.

By the way, I also organized a film that would burn, frame by frame, as it was shown. The projector would stop on each frame, play it, burn it out. Amazing.

MacDonald: What film did you use?

Ortiz: A war film. *The Red Badge of Courage* (1951, directed by John Huston), I think. That was my way of releasing Thanatos energy and also a way of speaking about Armageddon. Another artist was running the projector, while I had the audience popping paper bags and throwing them all over the place.

And then there was going to be a Santaria, which I had announced. But the people at the gallery couldn't find a live chicken for the ritual sacrifice. All they could come up with was a parakeet! Well, once people had heard about what I was going to do—*sacrifice an animal*—they called the police, who arrived in the middle of all this. I tried to explain Santaria. But they said, "No, it's not possible. You can't do that." So I said, "Well, okay," and went out into the street, followed by the whole audience (it was a storefront gallery). I had the cage with the parakeet, and I said, "I'll free the parakeet. I'll sacrifice my sacrifice." They said, "No, you can't do *that*. We don't know what will happen to the bird." I saw this child in the crowd and gave her the cage and said, "It's yours." At the end of the year, the *Sunday Herald*, one of the London newspapers, gave me the Tweety Pie Award.

MacDonald: Taking the chair apart is certainly more humane than attacking the people who use the chair. Since it's a chair in a men's club, it encodes that whole space. Is it fair to say that at that point, you picked an icon from the culture and destroyed it *in lieu of* doing real damage? In a sense, the recent digital pieces are similar: you find a moment in a film that encapsulates a certain cultural way of looking at things and then take it apart as a means of venting your frustration with it.

Ortiz: And of moving it into something else: the sacred context. The path back to the sacred *is* ritual; ritual is what allows us to cross from dislocation to an affirmation of life. Read *The Bible* or any sacred literature. We see that as the culture evolves spiritually, it moves from human sacrifice (in ancient cultures throughout this planet) to animal sacrifice and then to the notion finally of crucifying one's *imperfection* rather than oneself or someone else. Sacrificing yourself or other people is the primal error, the dislocation from the sacred. For me, relocating art within the sacred context is always in service of the affirmation of life. In fact, once that was clear to me, everything fell into place. My destruction of objects can be worded as simply as you have worded it: there is certainly a displacement involved—I kick the chair instead of kicking somebody—but there's more metaphysics involved.



Oritz in his computer-laser-video lab.

You could call my work a counter-phobic reaction to passivity in the face of one's sense of worth being overwhelmed. When you have a sense of not having any more breath, you gasp. For me, that spasmodic reaction is the struggle of Eros over Thanatos.

MacDonald: The other night I remembered seeing someone chop up a piano on *The Tonight Show* and realized it must have been you. How did you end up on Johnny Carson?

Ortiz: The *Village Voice* published something about the Destruction in Art Symposium, and somehow my name got mentioned to the people who selected *Tonight Show* guests. I was brought in to be interviewed about what had happened in London and to do a piano concert. On the show, Carson talked to me about the symposium. I mentioned a number of pieces I'd done and a Yoko Ono piece that I had participated in...

MacDonald: Which piece?

Ortiz: *Cut Piece*, where she sat in a meditative pose and people came up and cut pieces of her clothing off. The audience became, with time, less polite, reaching and grabbing, until finally she was nude. And then she

held up a sign saying, "My Nudity Is the Scar of My Soul," or something like that. Then someone came forward and wrapped a blanket around her. It was a strong piece and for me, the one piece of hers relevant to the Destruction in Art Symposium; the rest was Fluxus work, not Destructionist.

So Carson and I talked and then, after dedicating the piece to Glenn Gould, I chopped up the piano. Carson went wild over it. He replayed the piece on another show.

MacDonald: In her catalogue of your Museo del Barrio show, Kristine Stiles includes a picture of the Destructionist group. I don't know how I would have felt about it at the time, but today, my reaction is, "Wow, what a male group!"—especially compared with Fluxus, which included many women.

Ortiz: Yes. The Lollipop Gang was the only exception. They were three women and two men who had a giant lollipop full of incendiary material.

MacDonald: In your tape *Past Life Regression*, women make an appearance, but in a context very different from your earlier work.

Ortiz: That transformation is linked to my fascination with the indigenous. Within indigenous culture, the patriarchal visionary context is about spasm on the level of *blood* and *pain* and *thunder*. But within the matriarchal tradition, the dream is the place for revelation. Women don't have to go up to the mountaintop and starve or freeze in order to achieve revelation. No, they just take a nap and remember their dreams.



Inner vision work became important to me when I realized there are more subtle aspects of deconstruction: the destruction of the ego, of normal consciousness, in dreaming. Falling asleep and moving into the dream state is another form of sacrifice. Children don't want to go to sleep. They don't want to sacrifice their connection with the waking world. I learned to recognize the importance of the dream, and that created an important link for me in my relationship with women. More and more, I wanted to make that more subtle, matriarchal form of revelation central.

MacDonald: Until recently, film was thought of as the ultimate technological medium, and yet it's also a cliché to say that its primary popular use has been to reinforce cultural patterns (and male-dominated ideologies) that were around long before film. Some have said that American commercial film is a twentieth century medium devoted to a nineteenth century vision.

Is it fair to say that for you the new technologies you work with—digital, laser, video—have provided you with a means of overturning the mechanical technology of cinema and investing it with what you might define as a twentieth (or twenty-first) century vision?

Ortiz: For me, film is one of the places where our culture most believes it has established what culture means, what it is about, and where the culture should go. These popular films are part of the self-perpetuating notion that we can have complete control, that we can put things in a certain order and they will remain in that order forever. What I saw as basic to ritual was that that is definitely *not* the case. It's a very Western notion that once we're solidly formed, that's it; that's who we are. Ritual was about deconstructing the self, ages before the term "deconstruction" was invented. I found a way to remystify the film experience and relocate it back into the sacred by releasing the whole notion of its containing and being contained by a vision of a stable, solid world with meanings cemented into place. What I tried to do in a simpler way with my axe long ago, I do now with this alchemical machine, the computer, which provides a Shamanic context within which I can move the medium of film into the electrical space of the sacred and transmute it.

MacDonald: What are you interested in de- and re-constructing these days?

Ortiz: I'm becoming more and more interested in finding those situations where there's bias in film and exposing them, the way that for a long time I've revealed the moments where there's dance [Ortiz has made a series of "dance" pieces in which he reveals how commercial films use choreographed motion, often at pivotal moments in the plot, for a variety of purposes, including the transformation of hostility into entertainment].

We media artists can spend lifetimes going through the warehouses of film and exploring the realities within those realities. We can recontextualize and humanize them.

But people have understandable anxieties about the computer working against the role of the artist as humanizer. As a culture, we have often chosen to de-humanize invention and to allow it to become deformed. But that in itself isn't unnatural. Nature includes poison ivy and poison mushrooms, floods and locusts, things that lead, from the human point of view, to a great deal of inhumanity. So perhaps a certain amount of deformation is inevitable in any process of representation and communication.

We can see film as a universe of creation within which such elements exist. We need to take time to re-examine what's been created so far, so that the deformations become clear and creation can aid in undoing the damage they cause—and ultimately create new paths that lead toward the humanity we all pay lip service to.

I'm reminded of indigenous people saying, "How could you get lost in this little part of the woods." And you say, "But I don't know where I am!" And they say, "But you just moved 30 feet." They can name each tree and all the little plants, and so they can orient themselves. It's the same with our media consciousness: At this point we're lost; all the trees look the same, and we don't even *see* the little plants.

With videotape, there's just no way to get out of a linear context; you can only see it front-to-back. With laser, you just punch the directory and access any frame almost immediately. Electronic media can replicate the holographic openness of actual consciousness, and this can help us explore the details that have such a powerful, subtle effect on us.

I can see that some of my work so far is still caught up in conventional space/time and is no more or less profound than the material I'm working with. But at other times, when I really let go of the familiar ego attachment to more linear time and space and move into the holographic sense of things, something profound does seem to happen.

Scott MacDonald is professor of film studies and American Literature at Utica College of Syracuse University. A longer version of this interview, conducted in January and February 1994, will be part of MacDonald's A Critical Cinema 3 *(University of California Press), now in preparation. His* Screen Writings: Texts and Scripts by Independent Filmmakers *(Univ. of California Press) is due out in November.*

Ortiz's early films are available on video from Ortiz, 315 Harper Place, Highland Park, NJ 08904; (908) 846-2690. Ortiz is also the source for the digital/laser/videos in North America. In Europe, contact: 235 Media, Spichern Str.61, Koln, Germany; (tel): 011.49.221.523828. The best source of information about Ortiz's performance and assemblage-disassemblage work is the essay by Duke University art historian Dr. Kristine Stiles in *Raphael Montanez Ortiz: Years of the Warrior 1960/ Years of the Psyche 1988*, a retrospective catalog (El Museo del Barrio, 1988).



The Dream Team

By Pat Aufderheide

Members of the Kartemquin team (L-R): Frederick Marx, Steve James, and Peter Gilbert.
Photo: Ada Kolmodin, courtesy John Iltis Associates

A theatrical release, a book deal, a fictional remake... Kartemquin grapples with success after *Hoop Dreams* scores at Sundance.

Success, they say, can be as stressful as failure. But it didn't bother director Steve James much as he tried to keep pace with the deal-making surrounding *Hoop Dreams* at the 1994 Sundance Film Festival.

"I should be so lucky to have problems like that again," he laughs several months after the film's sudden splash, as he recalls the moment when it was finally clear this seven-year gamble by Kartemquin Films had paid off.

The film had just won Sundance's coveted Audience Award, and the *Hoop Dreams* team—executive producer Gordon Quinn, director Steve James, cinematographer Peter Gilbert, and co-editor Frederick Marx—were huddled in a hotel lobby with their producers' representatives, John Iltis and Dave Sikich, who were giving them one final pep talk.

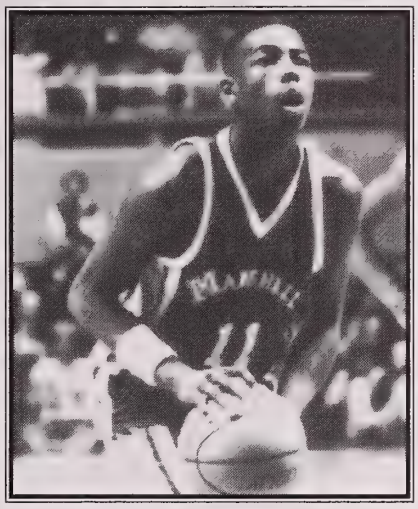
"We're walking into that restaurant," Iltis coached, "and we're going to have a wonderful time. They know who won the award; they're putting us at the central table. And everyone who comes in is going to greet us." Iltis proved right.

Luck has continued to pursue the guys from Kartemquin, a Chicago documentary production house long noted for its superb verité documentaries (*Last Pullman Car*; *Chicago Maternity Center Story*; *Golub*) and its noble poverty. Seven years after launching *Hoop Dreams* on a $2,000 state arts council grant (the money went to buy tapes), sifting through 250 hours of videotape (the information retrieval system alone was a

major achievement), tracking the growth of the two kids featured in the film, and producing five of their own along the way, the Kartemquin team has an award-winning film and a big bucks contract with distributor Fine Line Features. The film opens theatrically in New York on October 14, in conjunction with the start of basketball season, and will open across the country in late October and November They've also got a book deal with Turner Publishing and a fiction remake in the works through Turner Pictures. TNT and TBS, the home of the NBA on TV, are discussing cross-promotional activities. (Ted Turner's TNT, not so coincidentally, is the new owner of New Line Pictures, which owns Fine Line.)

On bad days, James likes to recall what Spike Lee (who's interested in producing the dramatic feature) told him: "Whatever happens, no matter who makes this, it won't be as good as the documentary."

Yes, a documentary. A three-hour documentary. Or, if you listen to Iltis and Sikich, "a real life story." And what a real life story it is—all about basketball, family, race, and the American dream. When shooting what was to be a half-hour project on street basketball courts in Chicago and their regular players, the Kartemquin team found two promising young black athletes. Over the next four-and-a-half years, they followed Arthur Agee and William Gates through high school and into their first year at college on athletic scholarships and created a thickly textured epic with a story line that couldn't be tighter if it were scripted.





Arthur Agee, playing for Marshall High, and William Gates (below) take a shot at a dream in *Hoop Dreams*.
Courtesy Fine Line Features

Arthur, lithe and sassy, and William, big and shy, start out together at St. Joseph's Catholic. Arthur, seen as less talented, can't afford to stay at St. Joe's with a partial scholarship and gets bumped back to a grim public school. His home life offers no solace; his parents are splitting up, and his dad loses his job and starts to deal drugs. Meanwhile, William wings along, even catching on to academics, urged on by his brother Curtis, himself once a basketball star and now a security guard. Then, his knee goes out, and he undergoes surgery to get back in the game.

The boys' basketball careers over the next two years, full of improbable upsets and heart-stopping action, are almost unbearably suspenseful, because it's not just a game. The boys, and much more so their families, pin what hopes they have on the their athletic success. Ultimately, the saga of these kids—this version of the American dream pegged on NBA fame—becomes emblematic of many basic social conflicts in American culture.

Of course, wonderful as *Hoop Dreams* is, it's still a largish entry in a genre so militantly dowdy that the Kartemquin guys wryly call the fiction remake *Hoop Dreams: The Movie*. So what made Sundance audiences fight for a ticket to get in the door?

The producers' nightmare was that nobody would notice the film. One of the biggest financial risks of the entire project was investing in a video-to-film transfer for the Sundance festival. To protect their investment, on the advice of veteran producer's representative John Pierson, they turned to Iltis and Sikich. The two men—Iltis's background is in public relations, Sikich's in film distribution—proceeded to convince powerhouse critics Roger Ebert and Gene Siskel to watch the film.

In a rave review on their television show before the Sundance festival, Ebert and Siskel told American moviegoers it was an "unforgettable portrait of American urban reality." (They still give it a plug every time a sports movie comes along.) That helped Sundance goers flag *Hoop Dreams* as a hot ticket.

The ensuing combination of hype and hard dealing gave the filmmakers a new set of challenges. Suddenly, Kartemquin was Hollywood's flavor of the month—or at least the week. Deals started flying over the transom, some with terms they had never even heard of. "We never anticipated any of this," Quinn admits. "We've been around a long time, but not at this level, and we needed help. We couldn't believe the dollar amounts, or the hype."

The publicized rumors of million-dollar deals for *Hoop Dreams*, using grossly inflated numbers, were all part of the game. "Every deal that was put in front of us," Quinn says, "Iltis and Sikich made at least twice as big as what we would have signed for." Those same numbers, however, also spelled potential trouble for Kartemquin, since they misrepresented the small company as a sudden lottery winner in the indie sweepstakes, when in fact they stood to get only a small percentage. When *Crain's Chicago Business* published a piece trumpeting million-dollar numbers, Quinn sternly took the magazine to task for endangering the company's financial future with funders who might no longer be sympathetic.

Hoop Dreams' good fortune on the theatrical front turned into major stomach acid for co-executive producer Catherine Allan at St. Paul's public TV station, KTCA. Two years into the project, Quinn managed to sign on KTCA as coproducer, and Allan helped the team raise its first substantial grant, from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. But the relationship was often strained.

"KTCA is one of the most progressive stations in the country," says Quinn. "And this film wouldn't have been made if we hadn't been making it for a broadcast audience in public TV.

"Even so, KTCA didn't have a clue about our needs, and we didn't have a clue about what they're about. We had to find out the hard way. We could all use a little education about each other's needs, in a noncombative atmosphere."

Allan ran interference for *Hoop Dreams* with her own financial officers, PBS, and CPB as terms changed over the years. "It's hard working with an evolving project," says Allan delicately. "Our credibility with PBS, for instance, was strained because the filmmakers would ask us to break an existing agreement and ask for more. We renegotiated the agreement three times."

The project had started out as an hour-long documentary for KTCA and ended up being two films—a half-hour educational show (*Higher*

Goals), and a monster feature. Just when KTCA had settled on a national airdate for the longer version, it suddenly would get overtaken by events. The end was typical, if tough.

"We had what seemed like a final arrangement with PBS," Allan recalls. "The project was supposed to air originally in April 1993, and then the deadline got pushed back again and again. Just now Fine Line pushed hard to get a whole year more to exploit it in home video markets. CPB came in with money when no one else would, and PBS stood by the film for years, and public TV has now agreed to pass up all the best windows.

"We've had to argue and push with the system on behalf of the filmmakers, and it hasn't always been fun."

Why put up with it? "Because with independents, you get a tremendous dedication, passion, and commitment," Allan replies. "But these guys definitely landed at the right little public TV station."



The Kartemquin team interviews Isaiah Thomas, basketball star and alum of St. Joseph's High School. Courtesy John Iltis Associates

Arthur Agee, above the rim in *Hoop Dreams*. Courtesy Fine Line Features

Hoop Dreams' big splash looks like it will leave most of the participants better off than they ever hoped. The big exceptions, ironically, are the film's subjects, Agee and Gates. The National College Athletic Association's regulations prohibit them or their families from benefiting financially in any way, on pain of losing their scholarships.

For the producers, this was unthinkable news. It precipitated dozens of hours of meetings with the families and NCAA officials to look for ways to honor the spirit of the rules while still treating the families fairly. The producers are still pushing for a waiver of the NCAA rules and maintain close and open relationships with the families.

None of the filmmakers is as well off as the idle gossip of six-figure sales suggest, though. That's partly because Fine Line's advance did not come to even half the million dollar figure strategically floated in the press by the producers' representatives during negotiations. It's also because the profits are split so many ways, and there are still huge debts being paid off.

For each filmmaker, the outcome of *Hoop Dreams*' success is slightly different. "I guess what I notice is that people return my phone calls now," says Marx. "[But] you have to put the success in perspective. We'll never see a reasonable salary for the time we put into it." While waiting to see their first checks come in, Marx was looking for freelance work to pay bills.

James and Gilbert together are hoping to parlay *Hoop Dreams*' success into funding for fiction features that have the energy of real-life drama. "I want to make narrative films," says James, "but I realize I'm most drawn to material that has a grounding in real events. I admire some filmmakers who have carved out a distinctive aesthetic style, but their aesthetic is about who they are. I'm always interested in capturing something about the world out there. And I plead guilty to being interested in films that are accessible." Gilbert hopes to draw on his twin backgrounds in longform documentary (Barbara Kopple's *American Dream*; Michael Apted's *A Long Way Home*) and in commercial television (most recently, the ABC series *Missing Persons*) as the pair searches for ways to meld storytelling with observations of American life.

For Quinn, a cofounder of Kartemquin Films, life may change the least. "For once we'll finish a project and not be in debt," he says. Dedicated to the verité style that he helped infuse *Hoop Dreams* with, he savors the film itself, the long and learning relationship with public television, and the chance to go on making documentaries about American society.

What the filmmakers do not have is a recipe for success. "One thing that's clear is how lucky we've been," says James. "A lot has been made of our perseverance, and that's the very spirit of independent filmmaking, but at the same time we got lucky from the start, when the stories became as dramatic as they did."

"The problem with a big success," says Quinn, a master at finding the cloud inside any silver lining, "is that everybody is asking us how to repeat it. The way to repeat it is not to try to do what we did.

"What's our secret? There is no secret. Get something you really want to do, and stick to it."

Pat Aufderheide is an associate professor in the School of Communication at The American University and a senior editor of In These Times.

By Mark Litwak

GETTING THE GOODS FOR MULTIMEDIA

Part 2: Licensing Images & Software

This two-part article explores some of the legal ramifications of producing multimedia programming. In the August/September Independent, *some of the issues regarding the licensing of text-based materials were reviewed. This article continues with a look at the licensing of film and video footage.*

Motion Pictures

When a multimedia producer wants to incorporate existing footage into a new work, many of the same copyright, character, trademark, title, and defamation issues discussed in last month's article on licensing text-based materials apply. The matter becomes even more tangled when there are multiple owners of rights in a motion picture.

For example, the film may be based on a copyrighted book, or it could incorporate music, the copyright to which is jointly held by a composer, musician, and record company. Permissions may be needed from actors and from owners of rights to special effects, animation, and works of art. And what if the film utilizes stock footage? This footage probably was licensed only for use in the original film.

Sometimes film clip owners may only agree to license the footage on a "quit-claim basis"—that is, without any warranties as to ownership of the various rights needed. It can be arduous for the producer to determine the identity of all the copyright owners and license the appropriate rights. This may prove impossible if the film clip owner won't reveal the contents of its contracts or if the contracts have been lost or destroyed.

If the film is based on a book, the studio probably bought the movie rights from the author but not necessarily any derivative rights, such as electronic publishing. Also, the right to use the book may have expired unbeknownst to the film clip owner. Recall that under federal copyright law prior to 1978, a copyright lasted 28 years and could be renewed for an additional 28 years. If the author of a book licensed movie rights to a producer and died before the second copyright term began, his estate would own the copyright to the second term. The producer may find that rights to the work can end abruptly if the estate refuses to relicense it, which it can do even if the author agreed to assign the second term to the producer.

Another potential problem arises when distribution rights to a film clip are shared by several parties, as when a studio owns domestic rights and foreign rights have been sold to other distributors. Can the owner of such foreign distribution rights prevent a multimedia producer from distributing a program with the clip in foreign territories? The answer is unclear.

If a film has been designated as culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant under the National Film Preservation act of 1988 and added to the national registry, other restrictions may apply. This act was passed in response to the movement to colorize old black-and-white movies. Under the act, 23 films a year can be added to the registry. While modification of these films is not prohibited, a disclaimer must be added.

Another issue arises when a multimedia producer wants to incorporate footage of a crowd scene in his or her work. While filming a person in a public place is usually not an invasion of their privacy, incorporation of a recognizable person's identity in a film may be an infringement of their right of publicity, which allows a person to control the use of his or her image, name, and likeness (including voice and signature) in a commercial setting. In the case of *Daily Times Democrat v. Graham*, for instance, publication of a photograph of a person whose underwear was exposed in public was held an invasion of privacy.

IN WORKING WITH UNIONS AND GUILDS, THE MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT A SYSTEM OF FEES AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS IS JUST DEVELOPING.

Whether a use is infringing depends upon whether the image is used in a commercial context, such as on a product, or in a newsworthy context, such as in a magazine or documentary program. The latter use is protected under the First Amendment. Thus producers should avoid incorporating a person's image in a purely commercial program or in advertising for such a program unless a release has been obtained.

Remember that the right of publicity is not limited to a person's image. Performances and objects closely associated with one's identity may also be protected. In *Motschenbacher v. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.*, the appropriation of a photo of a race car with distinctive markings for use in a cigarette ad was held to be an infringement of the driver's identity, even though he was not shown.

Of course, a person's right to restrict the use of his or her name, likeness, and voice has to be balanced against the rights of journalists and filmmakers under the First Amendment. Suppose a newspaper publisher wants to place a picture of a sports figure in its paper. Is permission required? What if *60 Minutes* wants to broadcast an exposé of a corrupt politician? What if Kitty Kelley wants to write a critical biography of Frank Sinatra?

In each of these instances, a person's name and likeness is being used on a "product" sold to consumers. Products such as books, movies, and plays, however, are also forms of expression protected by the First Amendment. The First Amendment allows journalists and writers to write freely about others without their consent. Otherwise, subjects could prevent any critical reporting of their activities. When one person's right of publicity conflicts with another person's rights under the First Amendment, the First Amendment rights often prevail.

When a use is newsworthy or in the context of a documentary, biography, or parody, the First Amendment will usually protect the producer. In *Hicks v. Casablanca Records*, Casablanca Records made a movie called *Agatha* about the well-known mystery writer Agatha Christie. The story was a fictionalized account of an 11-day disappearance of Christie. The film portrayed her as an emotionally unstable woman engaged in a sinister plot to murder her husband's mistress. An heir to Christie's estate brought suit alleging infringement of Agatha Christie's right of publicity.

The court held that Casablanca's rights under the First Amendment were paramount to the estate's rights. The court reasoned that the First Amendment outweighed the right of publicity here because the subject was a public figure, and the events portrayed were obviously fictitious.

If actors appear in a motion picture clip, contact the Screen Actor's Guild (SAG) or the American Federation for Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) to seek permission to use the actor's image. If the performance was first recorded on film, contact SAG; if first recorded on videotape, contact AFTRA.

The unions will supply you with the name of the actor's agent, who can then be contacted to

obtain permission. When an actor's name is unknown, it may be difficult to match his or her image with the names listed in the credits. And if an actor is not a guild member or is deceased, this too can make it hard to locate the rights holder.

In working with unions and guilds, the multimedia producer should recognize that a system of fees and royalty payments for electronic publishing is just developing. Some guilds have been willing to sign One Production Only (OPO) deals with multimedia producers and not require them to become guild signatories for all of their productions. The Writer's Guild, for instance, allows a production company to become a Guild signatory for one production by signing a Letter of Adherence. This letter does not mandate minimum scale payments or compliance with most guild rules. The producer need only agree to make pension and health fund payments.

Photographs

Still images are copyrightable. The same copyright, trademark, character, and tort issues that arise with the use of motion pictures apply here as well. Likewise, copyright defenses predicated on fair use or the First Amendment can be invoked.

It can be especially difficult to determine whether a photo is copyrighted and who its owner is. Many photos are not registered with the copyright office. Even if registered, a search can be tiresome, since a photo may not have a name or the name may not accurately reflect the image. Permissions can sometimes be obtained from the Graphic Artists Guild or the American Society of Media Photographers.

Some photos are clearly in the public domain, such as those in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. For other photos, the licensee should request the licensor to warrant that the licensor has all rights to a particular photo, including releases from any identifiable persons in the photos, and indemnify the licensee if a claim should arise from a third party. The license should also include a waiver of moral rights.

Music

The same copyright, trademark, and tort issues that apply to use of motion pictures apply here as well. Determining copyright ownership can be particularly complex, as there may be several simultaneous copyright holders for one piece of music. For example, the composer may own the copyright to the composition, the lyricist the copyright to the lyrics, and the record company the copyright to a recording.

Right of publicity issues can also arise. The 1988 Bette Midler case prohibited the use of a sound-alike voice of a celebrity as an infringement of Midler's rights. An ad agency had asked Midler to sing the song "Do You Want To Dance" for a car advertisement. After she declined to participate, the ad agency hired one of Midler's former backup singers to record the song imitating Midler's voice and style. When the advertisements were run, many listeners thought the song was sung by Midler. The ad agency obtained permission to use the song from its copyright owner but did not have Midler's consent to imitate her voice.

The court held that this imitation of Midler's voice infringed upon her rights. The court reasoned that when a distinctive voice of a professional singer is widely known and is deliberately imitated in order to sell a product, a tort has been committed in California. (The court limited the holding to the facts, and cautioned that not every imitation of a voice to advertise merchandise is necessarily actionable.)

The multimedia producer will need to obtain a mechanical license if music is going to be used without an accompanying image. If the music is used in synchronization with a video image, then a synchronization (sync) license will be needed. If the program will be distributed on videograms (disks or tape) or CD-ROMs, the producer will need a license for those uses as well. When music is modified, an adaptation license may be needed.

The issue of digital sampling has become hot in the music industry. Some artists have borrowed portions of pre-existing musical works. The samplers reason that borrowing a single note or short excerpt from another work is not an infringement because 1) what has been taken is not an expression of an author (i.e., no more than an idea was taken), or 2) the taking is protected under the fair use doctrine, or 3) the use is protected under the First Amendment.

In the recent case of *Acuff-Rose Music, Inc. v. Campbell* these issues were raised. Here the group 2 Live Crew parodied the Roy Orbison song "Pretty Woman." The Sixth Circuit found that 2 Live Crew's use of the prior work was copyright infringement and not a fair use. The decision was reversed this year by the U.S. Supreme Court which held that 2 Live Crew may have a Fair Use defense.

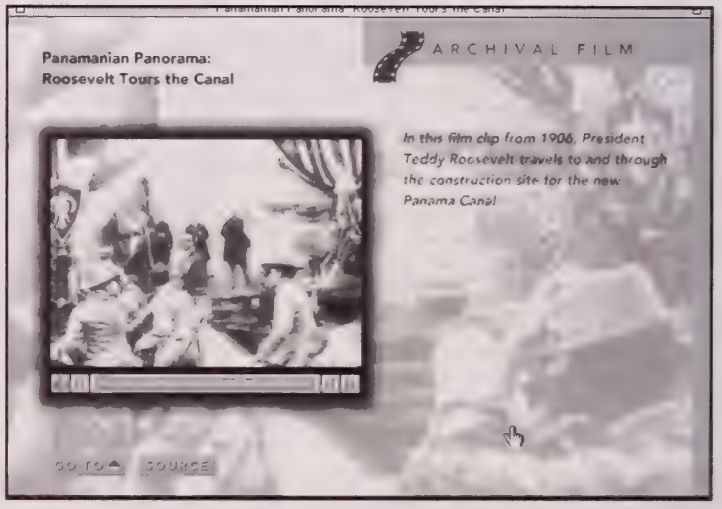
While it is doubtful that taking a few notes from another work could be deemed an infringement, there is no firm guideline that establishes how much can safely be taken. If the borrowed excerpt is recognizable to others, it is arguably an infringement.

The identities of copyright owners can be obtained through the performing arts guilds (SAG/AFTRA), the Songwriter's Guild of America (a trade association), or American Federation of Musicians (AFM). AFTRA covers singers; AFM covers instrumentalists.

Inexpensive music and sound effects can also be licensed from music libraries on a one-time, fixed-fee basis.

Architecture

Congress recently accorded copyright protection to architecture, placing it a separate category from pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works. The copyright in an architectural work is limited, however. The copyright owner cannot prevent others from publicly displaying pictures and photographs of buildings visible from a public place.



***Who Built America?*, an educational multimedia hypertext by the American Social History Project, makes use of numerous film clips and photos with differing licensing requirements.**
Courtesy Center for Media and Learning

Of course, even if a producer doesn't need permission to include a building's image in a program, that does not mean the producer can trespass on another's property to capture that image. Moreover, showing a recognizable image of a building in a defamatory context could harm the reputation of a company or individuals.

Fine Art

Pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works of art are copyrightable and displaying them in a program without permission could be an infringement. Suppose a piece of sculpture appears momentarily in the background of a scene. Is permission of the copyright owner necessary? Probably not. But if the artwork is featured in the foreground, a release should be obtained.

When Congress passed the Visual Artists

Rights Act of 1990, the United States expressly recognized certain moral rights that artists have in works of visual art, such as paintings, drawings, sculpture, and still photos. Moral Rights include the Right of Paternity, which is the right of an author to claim authorship to her work and prevent the use of her name on works she did not create, and the Right of Integrity, which prevents others from distorting or mutilating her work.

Moral rights differ from copyright. While the copyright to a work may be sold, the artist's moral rights may prevent the buyer of a piece of art from removing the artist's name or modifying the work. While the United States generally does not recognize moral rights, many of the moral rights granted artists in other countries are protected here as violation of our unfair competition and defamation laws.

A multimedia producer who incorporates art work in a program could be liable if the work is distorted, which may occur if the work is digitized and metamorphosed into a new form.

Computer Software

A multimedia work will contain computer software to operate the program. This software can be developed by the multimedia creator or licensed from another. Since software is copyrightable matter, it cannot be freely borrowed unless it is in the public domain.

Software can also be protected under patent law which protects the "Useful Arts," meaning any new and useful process or machinery. Thus multimedia software (the process) and the hardware (the machine) are patentable.

If software is developed by an outside contractor, the agreement between the parties needs to specify who will own the copyright and any patent to the work, and which rights are being licensed. The producer should have a written employment agreement with a covenant that the employee or independent contractor assigns all copyrights, inventions (whether patentable or not), and trade secrets developed in the course of employment to the employer.

If software is licensed for use in a multimedia program, the license agreement needs to spell out what uses can be made of the acquired software. Can the software be used to develop a new product? Can it be incorporated into the final work? If a license fee is to be paid, is it a one-time fee for unlimited use or a per unit royalty? Does the owner of the borrowed software share in the copyright of the new work?

A multimedia producer will want to register his or her work with the copyright office to prevent infringement by others. The Copyright Office has taken the position that the screen display of a computer program is protected by the copyright in the program. Thus one need not register the

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screen display separately as an audiovisual work.

A multimedia work comprising a series of images could be classified for copyright purposes as either a motion picture (if the images are moving) or an audiovisual work. Video games are considered audiovisual works. A virtual reality display might be considered a motion picture. To obtain forms and further information call the Copyright Forms hotline at (202) 707-9100 and ask for Circular 55, "Copyright Registration for Multimedia works." The circular is free.

Defensive Tactics

The multimedia producer is wise to consult an entertainment attorney with expertise in multimedia production to determine what licenses may be needed. This review should be undertaken early before a lot of time and effort are invested in developing a project. A competent attorney will suggest ways the producer can reduce costs and potential liability. For instance, the attorney could suggest that certain rights not be purchased if the producer is willing to fictionalize a story, rely on the fair use doctrine, change an individual's identity, or add disclaimers.

To protect oneself from potential liability, the multimedia producer should consider purchasing Errors and Omissions (E & O) insurance. E & O insurance will protect the insured from his or her own negligence when it gives rise to claims of defamation, invasion of privacy or publicity, copyright and trademark infringement, and breach of contract.

E & O insurance does not protect the insured from acts of intentional wrongdoing, such as deliberate infringement or fraud. Therefore the producer should be prepared to show he or she was acting in good faith. He or she should maintain records of releases and correspondence to secure rights and copies of letters from counsel regarding what licenses are necessary.

Insurers will typically require a producer to secure all necessary licenses and permissions. Also, a copyright report and title report will be needed, and all employment agreements must be in writing. If music is going to be used, synchronization and performance licenses will be necessary.

If the multimedia script is original, its origins must be determined to ensure that none of it has been copied from another work without permission. The insurer will then carefully review the project before issuing a policy.

E & O insurance will pay for any liability incurred as well as defense costs. Like other insurance policies there is a deductible, often $10,000 or more.

Recently American International Group (AIG), a large insurer, announced that it would offer Patent Infringement Liability Insurance. The

insurance includes coverage of expenses and damages including attorney fees incurred to defend any lawsuit alleging infringement of a U.S. patent. However, the minimum premium is $50,000 and the minimum deductible is $50,000. The insured also has to pay 10% of all damages and defense costs, and any punitive damages that may be awarded. The policy does protect you if you intentionally infringe on another's patent.

The multimedia producer will also want to take steps to ensure that his or her work is not pirated. Although copyright registration is not required, it is desirable. Registration for U.S. authors is necessary before instituting an infringement action, and only authors with registered works can recover statutory damages and attorney fees. While a copyright notice (© Jane Doe, 1994) is optional after March 1, 1989, placing a notice on all work is recommended. The notice will prevent infringers from claiming they did not know the work was copyrighted. The amount of damages recoverable from innocent infringers is less than from willful infringers.

The multimedia producer also may want to adopt a company or product trademark to distinguish his or her goods. A trademark search should be undertaken to ensure that there are no conflicting state or federal trademarks. Trademarks can be registered in a state where the mark is used or registered with the federal Patent and Trademark Office if the mark is used on goods or services in more than one state. Registration of a trademark is not required but entitles the holder to certain benefits. For example, federal registration makes the mark presumptively valid and incontestable after five years.

While technology permits producers to make innovative multimedia programs, the complex state of the law deters rapid development of the new medium. Many complex legal issues are likely to arise when a producer incorporates existing works.

Multimedia producers can minimize liability by creating programs entirely from scratch or by borrowing works that are clearly in the public domain or available under the Fair Use doctrine or the First Amendment. If the multimedia producer is planning to incorporate outside works, or is producing material that may infringe on another's rights, an attorney knowledgeable in multimedia legal issues should be consulted early and E & O insurance purchased.

Mark Litwak is an entertainment and multimedia attorney in Santa Monica, California. He is the author of Reel Power: The Struggle for Influence and Success in the New Hollywood, Dealmaking in the Motion Picture and Television Industry, *and the upcoming* Litwak's Multimedia Producers Handbook.



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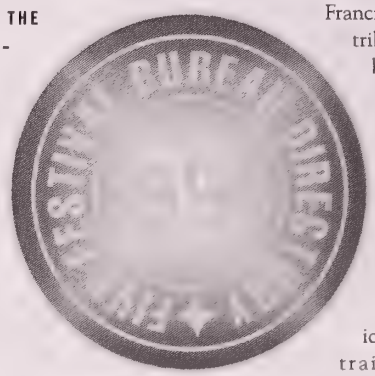
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By Kathryn Bowser

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Domestic

BLACK MARIA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Spring, NJ. Contemporary ind. film/video prods accepted for 14th edition of fest, named for 1st known motion picture studio. Fest seeks "artistically & conceptually provocative" works up to 90 min., any style or genre, solo & collaborative. After judging, more than 40 winning & selected works form collection exhibited in travelling showcase tour, presented at host institutions across country. Fest cited by Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences as Academy Award nominee-qualifying competition. Cash awards incl. Juror's Awards sharing $2,500; Juror's Citations sharing $2,000; Director's Choice sharing $1,000 plus $4,000 or more in rental honoraria. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Nov. 10. Contact: John Columbus, fest director, Black Maria Film & Video Fest, c/o Dept. of Media Arts, Jersey City State College, 203 West Side Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07305; (201) 200-2043.

COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 1-3, CA. 15th annual fest, to be held in conjunction w/ annual conference of grantmaking organizations (held in San Francisco this yr), showcases films/videos that have received support of foundation funders & "promote expanded use of media to advance philanthropic goals." Eligible projects must have received full or partial funding for either prod. or distribution from private, community, or corporate foundation or corporate giving program; grantmaking organization need not be member of Council on Foundations. Works funded solely from public agencies or federal/state funds ineligible. All lengths considered, from features to brief psa's; entries must have been produced w/in past 10 yrs. Screening committee looking for projects that offer examples of different ways media can impact on society; entries not limited to docs or advocacy, as committee also wishes to explore impact of fiction & experimental work. Selected works incl. in fest catalog distributed to all members of Council. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Oct. 14. Contact: Robin Hettleman, Council on Foundations, 1828 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 466-6512; fax: (202) 785-3926.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, CA. Recognized as one of premiere US fests for non-theatrical media, NEFVF is accepting entries for its 25th annual competition. Event, held in Oakland & San Francisco, is attended by distributors, publishers & broadcasters selling to educational, home video & broadcast markets worldwide. Eligible media incl. docs, live action shorts, dramatic features & shorts, animation, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructonal tapes, special interest videos, made-for-TV programs, public service announcements, student-made docs & narratives. Entries must have been completed between Jan. 1, 1993 & Dec. 1, 1994. Fest is "gateway" competition for Oscar consideration; Gold Apple winners (best of cat) are eligible to compete in Academy's doc & short subject cats. NEFVF entrants listed free of charge on database that reaches approx. 1 million librarians, educators & buyers internationally. Entry fees: $85 & up, depending on length; student fees $30 & up. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", multimedia programs. Deadline: Dec. 1; entries postmarked on or before Nov. 1 receive discount of $5/entry; late entries accepted through Dec. 15 w/ late fee. Contact: Competition Director, National Educational Film & Video Fest, 655 Thirteenth St., Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 465-6885; fax: (510) 465-2835.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Sponsored by the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, this is 13th annual edition of fest, one of world's foremost showcases dedicated to presenting works by film & video artists of the Asian Pacific diaspora. Last yr's fest showcased over 120 films & videos from 16 countries by new & established makers & hosted over 40 local, nat'l & int'l guests. 1995 fest theme, *A Century of the Asian Diaspora in Motion*, will highlight Asian diaspora during 100 years of motion pictures in special recognition of centennial celebration of birth of cinema. Program also incl. panels, presentations, audience awards & special events. Film/video entries must be by &/or about Asian Pacific & Asian Pacific American people, cultures & experiences. Works in all genres welcome: feature length, shorts, docs, narrative, experimental & animation. NAATA, formed in 1980, nurtures & supports Asian Pacific American artists working in film, video & radio. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Corey Tong, fest co-director, San Francisco International Asian American Film Fest, NAATA, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 7428.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL/GOLDEN GATE AWARDS COMPETITION, April, CA. Presented by San Francisco Film Society, competititve section of 38th San Francisco Int'l film fest is now in 33rd yr. Annual audiences average 40,000. Competition entries come from 34 countries & are judged by over 175 Bay area media professionals. Awards of trophies & cash honoraria in divisions of film/video (short narrative, artist profile, art work, animation, history, current events, sociology, environment); TV (feature, comedy, drama, fine arts/variety, arts/humanities, sociology, history, current affairs, environment); Bay Area film/video (short, doc). Other cats incl. nature, biography & music videos. Main section curated & noncompetitive. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 9. Contact: Brian Gordon, SF Film Society, 1521 Eddy St., San Francisco, CA 94115-4102; (415) 567-4294; fax: (415) 921-5032.

SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, March 3-12, 1995, CA. Features, shorts, docs, experimental, animation and student films accepted. Awards: Dame Judith Anderson Award for Best Feature Film, Bruce C. Corwin Award for Artistic Excellence, Jury Award for Best Director, Best of the Fest people's choice award, Best Live Action Short, Best Doc Short & Best Santa Barbara Filmmaker. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $35 US/$40 Int'l. Deadline: Dec. 30. Contact: Diane Durst, SBIFF,1216 State St., Ste. 710, Santa Barbara CA 93101; (805) 963-0023; fax: (805) 962-2524.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, January, UT. Sundance, held in Park City, UT, is foremost US competitive showcase for new ind. film. Many important works have premiered here & launched theatrical life. Dramatic & doc films accepted. Entries must have significant US financing (films produced, financed, or initiated by major film studios ineligible for competition, but films purchased after completion eligible). Work must be completed after Oct. 15, 1993. Entries may not open theatrically before Feb. 1, 1995 in more than 3 N. American markets, be broadcast nationally & may not play in more than 1 domestic film fest prior to Sundance. Dramatic films must be at least 70 min. & docs at least 50 min. Shorts ineligible for main competition, but may be submitted for screening. Awards: Grand Prize (jury ballot), Cinematography Award (jury ballot), Audience Award (popular ballot). Filmmakers' Trophy (filmmaker vote). Films selected in drama cat. also compete for Screenwriters' Award (jury ballot). Films selected in Doc cat. will aslo be competing for Freedom of Expression Award (jury ballot). American films selcted in shorts cat. will be eligible for special award. One rep from each competing film invited to attend as fest's guest. Attended by large number of distributor, programmers, journalists, critics & agents; fest is know as intense center of networking & film industry contact mecca for inds. Entry fee: $50 ($20 shorts). Formats: 35mm 16mm; preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 21 features, Oct. 7 shorts. Contact: Sundance Film Fest, Ind. Film Competition, 225 Santa Monica Blvd., 8th fl., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 394-4662; fax: 8553.

Foreign

BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, February, Germany. One of world's top int'l fests, w/ nearly 30,000 annually attending fest & concurrent European Film Market. Now celebrating 45th yr, Berlin is generally regarded as hospitable to ind. films

& has history of programming innovative works. Fest is supported by all levels of German gov't. It is divided into several sections, each w/ its own character & organization. Int'l Competition: by invitation, programmed by fest director Moritz de Hadeln, 35mm & 70mm features & shorts. Sections known most for strong programming of US independents are Int'l Forum of New Cinema, headed by Ulrich Gregor & Panorama (noncompetitive section of official program) headed by Wieland Speck. Both screen narrative, doc & experimental works. Forum specializes in avant-garde intellectual & political films (60 min. & up, 16mm & 35mm). Panorama presents wide range of work from low-budget to more commercial films, incl. studio releases (features & shorts under 20 min., 16mm, 35mm, 70mm). Other sections: Kinderfilmfest (35mm, 16mm films over 60 min. & shorts up to 30 min. produced for children), New German Films & Retrospective. The European Film Market is important meeting place for screening & sales, w/ reps from 40 countries. Entries must be produced in yr. preceding fest & not released theatrically or on video in Germany. American Independents & Features Abroad (AIFA) market booth, organized by New York Foundation for the Arts w/ consortium of 40 ind. media orgs. is center of activity for US ind. filmmmakers. AIFA distributes catalogs & posters, arranges screenings, organizes press conferences & functions. Along w/ films selected by fest, AIFA reps 20 theatrical features & docs w/ theatrical possibilities. For info on AIFA, contact: Lynda Hansen/AIFA Hotline, NYFA, 155 Spring St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 366-6900 x333; fax: (212) 366-1778. Fest deadline: Nov. 18. Contact: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Budapester Strasse 50, D-10787, Berlin, Germany; tel: 49 30 254890; fax: 49 30 25489249.

CRETEIL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 31-Apr. 9, France. One of world's oldest fest of films by women is celebrating its 17th yr. Held in Paris suburb of Creteil, fest annually attracts audiences of over 35,000, incl. filmmakers, journalists, distributors & buyers. Controversial & critical discussions are part of proceedings. Sections: official competition, retro of modern woman director, self-portrait of actress, tribute to pioneer of women's film, young cinema & int'l program. Special events for 1995 edition incl. A Century of Cinema: European Women Pioneers; Women's Films from the Balkans; Women Filmmakers in Silent Cinema (symposium). Competitive section selects 13 narrative features, 13 feature docs & 30 shorts. All films shown 3 times. Cash & equipment prizes: FF20,000 Prix du Public in each cat., FF20,000 Grand Jury Prize, 6 other prizes (total FF45,000). Films must be directed or co-directed by women, completed since Mar. 1, 1993, not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV or shown at other French fests. Student prods ineligible. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Fest pays for accommodations (3 days) for filmmakers & r/t shipping for selected films. Entries need dialogue transcript, synopsis, publicity & bio material. US preselection is done by rep Bérènice Reynaud. Entry fee: $15 (for s & h, payable to Bérènice Reynaud. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2" only. Deadline: Nov. 15. For appl. & info, send SASE to: Bérènice Reynaud, California Institute of the Arts, School of Film/Video, 24700 McBean Pkwy, Valencia, CA 91355; fax: (805) 254-2088. Do not call; direct phone inquiries to FIVF (212) 473-3400.

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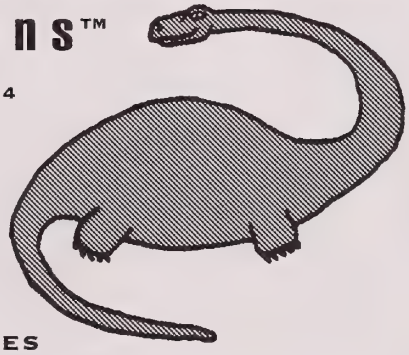
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6-PLATE STEENBECK model ST 900W w/ trim bin, guillotine & Revis splicers: $4,000. Call George Hornbein (404) 814-0342, leave msg.

7-COLOR VIDEO MONITORS: Panasonic BT-S1900N. Mint condition. $500 each. Call (212) 226-4134.

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ECLECTIC ENTERTAINMENT CO., worldwide distribution for cutting-edge art house or mainstream feature films. Send tapes to: 8033 Sunset Blvd., ste. 474, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 466-0801; 5980 (fax).

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS, distributor of award-winning film & video on disabilities, health care, mental health, family/social issues, etc. seeks new work for distribution to educational markets. Karen McMillen. Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St. Boston MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

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ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" columns in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development through distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact: Robert L. Siegel Esq. (212) 545-9085.

ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER. Former AIVF executive director & founding chair of ITVS has returned to legal practice. Have your project represented by lawyer w/ in-depth understanding of ind. prod., financing, distribution & public TV. Reasonable rates. Call Lawrence Sapadin (718) 768-4142.

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AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. ***JOIN AIVF TODAY!***

Here's what AIVF membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals*—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with a festival consultant for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country, call the office for the one nearest you. *Plus*, members are carrying on an active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information in person or on the phone about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs.
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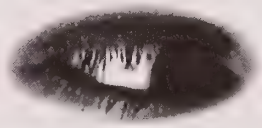
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Conferences • Seminars

AMERICAN CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S TELEVISION is holding annual conference & awards ceremony in Chicago from Nov. 7 to 10. Screenings & discussions of 23 nominees & issues surrounding field will precede 1993 Ollie Awards ceremony on Nov. 10. To receive registration packet, call: The American Center for Children's TV (708) 390-6499; fax (708) 390-9435.

BAY AREA VIDEO COALITION (BAVC) will offer classes in a variety of aspects of video pre- & postprod. during Nov. & Dec. Limited class size, so register now. For more info, call: Anne Etheridge (415)861-3282.

IFFCON: INTERNATIONAL FILM FINANCING CONFERENCE, 3-day event (Jan. 13-15, 1995) in San Francisco, linking US ind. filmmakers searching for financing w/ int'l buyers & producers interested in US coprods. Incl. roundtables, private meetings & receptions. Limited to 60 participants, chosen through selection process. Deadline: Nov. 8. Presented by EBS Productions & Film Arts Foundation. For info and appls, call (415) 281-9777.

WHO SPEAKS FOR WHOM?, Northeast Regional Conference of Society for Photographic Education, Nov. 4-6, Univ. of Hartford. Keynote speakers Lucy Lippard & Rayna Green. Concurrent exhibitions curated by Lippard, Julia Ballerini & Gene Gort. For info, send legal SASE to: SPE Form, Hartford Art School, Univ. of Hartford, W. Hartford, CT 06117.

Films • Tapes Wanted

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47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, resumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest, (404) 231-4846.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENTS seeks film & video shorts (under 20 min.) in all genres, formats for D.C. "ind. showcase" program. Possible deferred payment. Send VHS or 3/4" copy (returnable w/ SASE) to: 1812 Ingleside Terrace N.W., ste #5, Washington D.C. 20010; (202) 232-5934.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FIFTEEN MINUTES, Wash. D.C. nightclub, seeks videos & films for screening & performance events. Fees to artists. Accepts 16mm, VHS, S-VHS & Hi-8. Also looking for ambient video. FFI: Eric Gravley, 15 Minutes, 1030 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 677-5643.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, ste. 4768, NY, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks comedy shorts (under 10 min.) in all comedy styles/genres to air on LA cable access. Future distribution package may provide possible deferred pay. Send submissions (3/4" preferred) & SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods., 572 1/2 S. Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on the aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Mary Yalanjian, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI, 53201; (414) 229-6971.

GROWING UP FEMALE, Univ. of Michigan video showcase, seeks experimental videos by women on what it means to be female. Personal expressions, cultural explorations in all genres. Deadline: Oct. 18. Send VHS copy & SASE to: Bettina Fabos, 2020 Frieze, U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1285; (313) 769-6819.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) made by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have a chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi-8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley; Halcyon Days Prod., c/o HI-8, 12 West End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

INFO ON JAPANESE-AMERICANS SOUGHT by NY film journalist & assist. to foreign fests. Needs info on videos & film on Japanese-Americans before, during & after Pacific War. All topics, all genres. Send copy w/ synopsis, length, prices, name & address, to: Gordon Hitchens, 241 W. 85th St., Apt. 3W, NY, NY 10023-3914.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: In Visible Colours, 119 West Pender #115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S4; tel.: (604) 682-1116.

JERUSALEM INDEPENDENT TELEVISION (JITV) seeks ind. film & video from around the world in any language. Incl. English translated storyboard w/ VHS copies, treatment, description, press kit, standard release form, posters, photo of maker & $19 entry fee (payable to JITV) to: Vlad M. Mogilevsky, senior VP, JITV, PO Box 39596, Ramat Aviv 61390, Israel.

LA VOZ LATINA, seeks video tapes made by Latinas/os living in US for presentation at the Festival Internacional de Video del Cono Sur in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay & Uruguay in 1995. Any genre; Under 40 min. Deadline: Jan. 15, 1995. Send VHS preview copy w/ description, reviews, resume, bio & SASE to: Luis Valdovino, Fine Arts Dept., University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309; tel. (303) 492-5482; fax (303) 492-4886.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi-8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 1415 Third St. Promenade, ste. 301, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatamala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres/any medium/1- to 60-min. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for first nat'l story! Submit now to: EDGE Television, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SHORT FILMS WANTED for "Twilight Zone-type" anthology series. Looking for short (up to 30 mins.) films in color, covering suspense, thriller, fantasy, science fiction, action/adventure & light horror. Prefer strong narrative films w/ plots twists & surprise endings. For more info, call (310) 396-3115.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or under-

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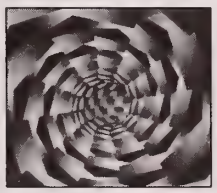
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water & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE NEWZ, half-hour, late-night comedy TV show based on topical news events, is actively seeking submissions. Footage will be showcased on national series. Formats: D-2, Beta SP, Beta, 3/4", Super VHS, VHS, or Hi-8. Cats: News-style stock shots (skylines, panoramas, local landmarks, local sports icons, etc.) & comedic shots. Must include signed submissions release for stock footage. For info or release form, contact: The Newz Submission Line (407) 354-6590.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, or call (215) 895-2927.

VIDEO SHORTS seeks works of 15 min. or less. Open to all video artists & genres. Selected entries will be screened at U. of Texas at Dallas on Oct. 21. Deadline: Oct. 14. Screenings in VHS or S-VHS only. Send tapes w/ resumé, return postage & mailer to: Video Shorts, U. of Texas at Dallas, mail station JO31, Box 830688, Richardson, TX 75083-0688. For info, call Jennifer Hoffecker (214) 705-6353; fax: (214) 690-2989.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, manager of broadcast projects & acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new prime-time series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under one hour; completed; all rights cleared. Pays $35/min. for 3 releases over 2 years. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: *NY Independents*, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

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EXPERIENCED AVID EDITOR w/ access to Avid editing system needed to teach asst. film editor fundamentals & finer points. Will pay or barter services. Call (718) 625-2965.

FILM/VIDEO CHAIRPERSON needed for 25-year old BA/MFA Film/Video department at Columbia College in Chicago. Applications & nominations now being accepted for position avail. June 1, 1995. Requirements include: substantial experience in film/video prod.; commitment to film education; budgetary & fund raising skills; knowledge of new & tradition techniques; ability to develop relationships in industry & extensive administrative abilities. Competitive salary & excellent benefits. Minority & women applicants encouraged to apply. Submit resume & statement of teaching philosophy (no phone calls please) to: Film/Video Chair Search, Human Resources Department, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605.

NYC AREA TV PRODUCER is creating TV pilot about ind. filmmakers & is seeking filmmakers w/ current or upcoming projects to be featured in pilot. Call Paul Mulcahy (212) 865-7462.

PROFESSOR OF ELECTRONIC/VIDEO ART sought by Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute. Must be visual artist specializing in electronic intermedia, interactive systems, installation & performance. Online integrated media studio, arts-related software or hardware development & critical theory desirable. Begin Jan. 1995. F/t, tenure-track appointment, teaching grad & undergrad courses, requires terminal dergree or equivalent professional recognition. Send resumee, cover letter, 3 reccos & work samples to: Faculty Searches, IEAR Studios, DCC 135, RPI, Troy, NY 12180; (518) 276-4778; fax: 276-4780. EOE.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NY (SUNY) AT PLATTSBURGH invites applicants for f/t, tenure-track position in Dept. of Communication to begin spring or fall 1995. Duties incl.: teaching basic & advanced courses in studio or field video prod. Experience teaching 1 or more of following desirable: Digital Audio/Video Postprod., Writing for Media &/or Video Aesthetics. Qualifications: Masters & at least 3 yrs professional &/or teaching experience. (Doctoral degree, scholarly writing & interest in assisting w/ student-produced TV operation desired.) Academic rank & salary negotiable. Opportunities for summer teaching & research/prod. grants avail. Review of appls. will begin Nov. 1; appls. accepted until position filled. Send letter, résumé, video portfolio & 3 lette5rs of recco to: Chair, search committee, c/o Office of Personnel, SUNY Plattsburgh, Box 1832-1001; Plattsburgh, NY 12901. EOE.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

CALL FOR PAPERS: anthology of critical essays concerning video/film prod. is being compiled. Purpose of text is to provide alternative source of info from traditional prod. textbooks, which tend to be equipment-oriented. Focus will be on think pieces covering wide range of aesthetic, analytical & critical/cultural concerns that will benefit students in prod. work. Submit manuscripts or extended abstracts in triplicate by Dec.15 to: Kathryn Lasky, Dept. of Communication, University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME 01403; (202) 780-5031; fax: (202) 780-5739.

GAUNTLET, Exploring Limits of Free Expression, is an open forum on First Amendment Rights covering issues of pornography, racism, film censorship, media manipulation, prostitution, cults, sexual harassment, etc. For copies or more info, send a SASE to: Barry Hoffman, Editor, 309 Powell Rd., Sept. PR94A, Springfield, PA 19064

Resources • Funds

AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY offers visiting fellowships for filmmakers/creative & performing artists. Will provide fellowships to people who aim to produce works dealing w/ pre-twentieth century American history designed for general public. Deadline: Oct. 17. At least 3 fellowships awarded for 4-8 week residencies between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31, 1995. For info, contact: John B. Hench, director of research/publication, 185 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609-1634; (508) 755-5221 or 752-5813.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE is accepting entries for 1994 Robert Bennett Award recognizing excellence in local TV programming. Entries must be at least 30 min., aired in US between July 1, 1993 & Sept. 30, 1993, produced by local station or ind. & telecast in local market. For appls & guidelines, write: The Robert M. Bennett Award, c/o AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90027-1625; (213) 856-7787.

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris at (612) 341-0755.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for $500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER is now accepting appls. for its 5-day, video image processing residency program. Must have previous experience in video prod.; all genres welcome. Appls. must incl. resume, video of recent work (3/4" or VHS), SASE & project description indicating how image processing is integrated into work. Deadline: Dec. 15. For more info, contact: Experimental TV Center, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS Film Bureau offers financial assistance specifically for film speaker's fees to nonprofit community orgs. in NY state. Priority given to groups showing works by ind. filmmakers. Bureau funds only film presentations. Requests must originate from sponsoring org. Max. subsidy per org. is $1,000/yr. Max. subsidy for orgs. receiving NYSCA

exhibition funds is $600/yr. Bureau offers speakers fees on sliding scale (up to $250 for local artists; $300 for artists traveling to sites that require overnight stay.) Deadline: Oct. 15. In letter, incl. list of films, film speakers to be hired w/ fees; other sources of funding; plans for advertising; amount requested & anticipated audience figures. Send to: Duana Butler, film bureau coordinator, FVA, 817 Broadway, NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

MACDOWELL COLONY seeks film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artist community in Petersborough, NH. Deadlines: Jan. 15 (May-Aug. session), April 15 (Sept.-Dec.), Sept. 15 (jan.-April). Ability to pay not factor for acceptance. Ltd. travel grants avail. Write or call for info, appl.: MacDowell Colony, 100 High St., Peterborough, NH 03458; (603) 924-3886.

POSTPRODUCTION GRANTS AVAIL. through Solar Productions in NYC to "aid ind. film & video artists in realizing their artistic vision." Two projects will be chosen per year to receive up to 15 hrs of free online editing time. Ind. projects w/ socially conscious themes & artistic intent are eligible. Preference given to projects already in postprod. Deadline: Oct. 31. For appl., send SASE to: Solar Artist-in-Residence, Solar Productions, 580 Broadway, ste. 606, NY, NY 10012; (212) 925-1110.

THE FUNDING EXCHANGE's Paul Robeson Fund for Ind. Media's ccepts appls. for doc film & video projects in preprod. or distribution stages only. Deadline: Dec. 1. Grant decisions will be announced by March 30, 1995. Projects must address critical political & social issues, have highly developed distribution initiative & have ability to be used for political advocacy &/or organizing purposes. Producers utilizing alternative forms of social issue doc making are encouraged to apply. Appls will not be faxed. Write or call: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 Fifth Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

INTERMEDIA ARTS/MCKNIGHT INTERDISCPLINARY FELLOWSHIPS is offering 5 awards of $12,000 to artists producing innovative interdisciplinary work. Deadline: Nov. 10. Contact: Melanie Nyberg of Al Kosters, 425 Ontario St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444

JEROME FOUNDATION offers 1994 Regional Film/Video Grants. to support personally conceived ind. film/video prods. in five-state region of IA, MN, ND, SD & WI. Appls. postmarked by Oct.14. Awards announced in Dec. 1994. For info on eligibility & appl. materials, contact: Regional Film/Video Grants, The Jerome Foundation, W1050 First National Bank Bldg., 332 Minnesota St., St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 224-9431.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENTS FOR THE ARTS is accepting grant applications for film/video prod. Deadline: Oct. 28. Also, deadline for TV & radio grants is Dec. 10. For more info, contact: NEA, The Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW,

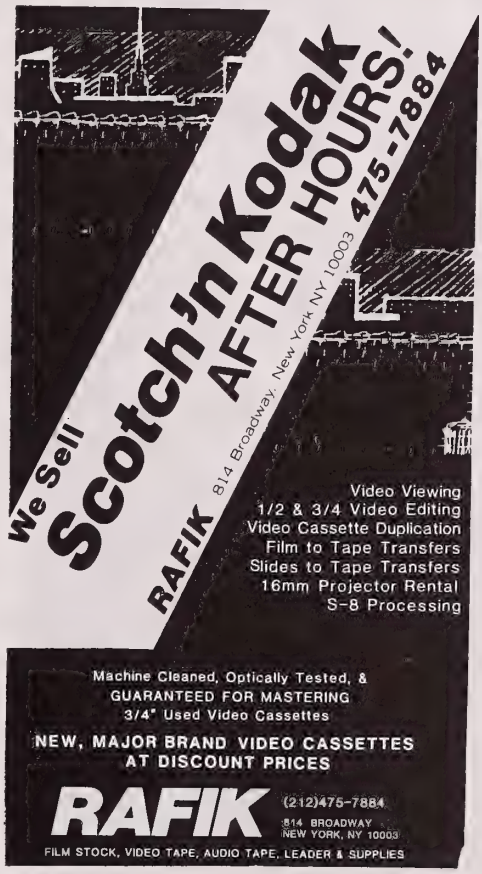
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NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of the last 3 yrs., or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

PENNYSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites appls for 1995-96 scholars-in-residence program. Provides support for f/t research study at any of facilities maintained by Commission for 4 to 12 consecutive weeks between May 1, 1995 & April 30, 1996 at rate of $1,200/mo. Program open to college & university affiliated scholars, incl. grad students, ind. researchers, public-sector professionals, writers & others. Dealine: Jan. 20, 1995. For info, contact: Division of History, PA Historical & Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

PHILADELPHIA IND. FILM/VIDEO ASSOCIATION provides small prod. grants, primarily completion funds, to non-commercial, ind. film/video/audio works by PIFVA members based in the greater Philadelphia area. Deadline: Oct. For more info, contact: PIFVA, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 387-5125.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, director of grants programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

SOUTHERN HUMANITIES MEDIA FUND is accepting grant proposals for film/video prods of American South from nonprofit organizations chartered in AL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA & W. VA. Deadline: Oct. 14 (postmark date). For appls & info., contact: The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities & Public Policy (804) 924-3296.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media arists should contact Arts International for 1994 appls. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

MOVING?

LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY!

The Post Office does not automatically forward nonprofit mail, and we cannot replace issues of *The Independent* that you did not receive due to a change of address.

Call Judah Friedlander:
(212) 473-3400.

Memoranda: continued from p. 52

AIVF staff an opportunity to meet members in those areas, share plans and ideas, and generate some forward-looking discussion for regular programs and partnerships with colleague organizations. Local members will receive a mailing; call the office for more info.

Boston:
When: Thursday, November 3, 7 pm
Where: Newton Television Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Newton, MA

Phiadelphia:
When: Monday, November 7, 7 pm
Where: PIFVA, International House, 3701 Chestnut St,m Philadelphia, PA

SALONS GO NATIONAL

Members are organizing AIVF salons in Austin, TX, Stamford, CT, Durham, NC, and Kansas City, MO. For specifics on where and when, or to talk to us about starting one in your area, call Pam Calvers (212) 473-3400.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices to learn about the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the resource library. *RSVP appreciated.*

When: Monday, November 14, 5:30 pm.
Where: AIVF offices

NEW DENTAL PLAN

We are pleased to announce that CIGNA is offering a new dental insurance plan to AIVF members. The premiums range from $16.87 to $51.21 per month, and the plan is available in most states. For more information on benefits and eligibility, call Burt Diamond, (212) 758-5675.

TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATE

Two new trade discount vendors!

The Empowerment Project of Chapel Hill, NC, will offer a 20% discount on video editing and up to 35% on selected projects. Contact: David Kasper, 3403 Highway 54 West, Chapel Hill, NC 27516; (919) 967-1863.

The New York BCS Broadcast Store offers members a 10-15% discount on all purchases of used video equipment. Contact: Michael Rose, 460 W. 34th St., 4th fl., NYC 10001; (212) 268-8800.

Please note the following updated information for Mill Valley Film Group in California: tel: (415) 461-8334; contact Will Parrinello; 35% discounts on Beta SP production packages, production personnel, and VHS off-line editing facilities. Rates negotiable for selected projects.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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Nonprofit Members
ACS Network Productions, Washington, DC; Alternate Current, New York, NY; American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; American Film Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Ann Arbor Community Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; John Armstrong, Brooklyn, NY; The Asia Society, New York, NY; Assemblage, New York, NY; Athens Center for Film & Video, Athens, OH; Bennu Productions, Yonkers, NY; Benton Foundation, Washington, DC; Black Planet Productions, New York, NY; Blackside, Boston, MA; Breckenridge Festival of Film, Breckenridge, CO; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Productions, New York, NY; Center for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Center for New Media, New York, NY; Chicago Access Corp., Chicago, IL; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; Citurna LTDA Film and Video Productions, Bogota, Columbia; Coe Film Associates, New York, NY; Colelli Productions, Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Columbus Community Cable Acess, Columbus, OH; Command Communications, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, New York, NY; MHCC Communication Arts, Gresham, OR; Community Television Network, Chicago, IL; Cunnigham Dance Foundation, New York, NY; Denver International Film Society, Denver, CO; State University of New York-Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; Duke University, Durham, NC; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Eclipse Communications, Springfield, MA; Educational Video Center, New York, NY; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Empowerment Project, Chapel Hill, NC; Eximus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fallout Shelter Productions, Mansfield, OH; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Films by Edmund Levy, New York, NY; First Run Features, New York, NY; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Gay Men's Health Crisis, New York, NY; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Center, Atlanta, GA; Imagination Children's TV, Mansfield Center, CT; International Cultural Programming, New York, NY; Intermedia Arts Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; International Audiochrome, Rye, NY; International Film Seminars, New York, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Productions, Boulder, CO; Missoula Community Access, Missoula MT; NAATA, San Francisco, CA; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; KCET National Latino Community Center, Los Angeles, CA; National Center for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; National Video Resources, New York, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., New York, NY; New Image Productions, Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, PA; 911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; One Eighty One Productions, New York, NY; Outside in July, New York, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, New York, NY; Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Promontory Point Films, Albany, NY; University of Nebrska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE; Ross-Gafney, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA; Southwest alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; Sundance Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Terrace Films, Brooklyn, NY; Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; University of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; UCLA Film and TV Archive, Los angeles, CA; University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; USA Film Festival, Dallas, TX; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, British Columbia; School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Virginia Festival of American Film, Charlottesville, VA; West Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; Women Make Movies, New York, NY; Yann Beauvais, Paris; York University Libraries, North York, Ontario; Zeitgeist Film, Tampa, FL

By Pamela Calvert

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are pleased to welcome **Jennifer Lytton** to AIVF/FIVF as our new program associate. Jennifer is providing acutely needed support in the areas of programs and services, including managing the festival bureau. Her exceptionally varied job experience ranges from working as a training facilitator on Media Network's *Seeing Through AIDS* project to producing her own documentary film projects here and in India. We hope members will introduce themselves to Jennifer when visiting the library or at our salons and other events.

We would also like to congratulate **Mitch Albert**, former intern for *The Independent*, on his promotion to editorial assistant. He is replacing **Sue Murray,** who has gone on to pursue a Ph.D. in Media, TV, and Film at the University of Texas, Austin. The magazine welcomes **Vanessa Ira** as our new intern. Vanessa is finishing her M.A. in Publishing Studies at New York University, and previously worked as editorial staff on the Philippines' *Manila Chronicle*, and *Tasyo* and *Special Edition Press* here in New York.

FALL EVENTS

WORKSHOPS

GRANTSWRITING INTENSIVE

A one-day workshop focusing on the nuts and bolts of getting grant money for independent productions. Topics covered include: defining your project; locating potential funders; writing effectively about your film; adapting proposals for specific funders; preparing sample tapes; and strategic budgeting. The class will use a participatory workshop format and, if at all possible, students should come with a draft description for their film or video. Instructor Peter Miller produced the ITVS documentary *Passin' It On*, which is part of the 1994 *P.O.V.* series on PBS, and was coordinating producer of the Academy Award-winning documentary *American Dream. Limited to 15 participants; pre-registration with deposit required.*

When: Saturday, October 1, 10 am - 4:30 pm
Where: AIVF office
Price: $50 AIVF members; $60 others

BREAKING IN: GETTING STARTED AS A PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

You're new in the business, fresh out of school, just moved to New York, and all you hear is, "It's not what you know, it's who you know." Anthony Bregman, director of production, and Mary Jane Skalski, director of development at Good Machine, the independent production company responsible for successes including *Eat Drink Man Woman* and *What Happened Was...*, will talk about how to get your foot in the door and the resources available to help you keep moving up. Participants will receive printed materials defining jargon and standard expectations of p.a.'s on the set to help you with making that all-important good first impression. *Limited to 20 participants; pre-payment required.*

When: Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 pm
Where: AIVF offices
Price: $20 AIVF members; $25 others

SPECIAL EVENT

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

The National Endowment for the Humanities is one of the country's primary funders of independent media projects. We are, therefore, very pleased to announce that FIVF will be hosting an evening presentation by NEH staff to discuss the Endowment, the types of grants it offers, what it looks for in proposals, how proposals are reviewed, and how to make your application not just eligible but *competitive*. Guests will include filmmakers who have received NEH funding, as well as staff from the New York Council on the Humanities. *This event will be on-line-enhanced; questions for the NEH staff will be solicited on our America Online bulletin board, Artswire, and the WELL, and a full report of the event will be posted there afterwards.*

The following day, NEH staff will meet individually with mediamakers to discuss specific projects and applications in film, television, and radio. You must attend the evening presentation to be given an individual appointment. *Free, but limited capacity; reservation required.*

***Evening presentation:* Wednesday, October 5**
6:30-7 pm reception, 7:00-9 pm presentation
***Where:* Anthology Film Archives,**
32 2nd Ave., New York City

***Individual appointments:* Thursday, October 6,**
9 am-5 pm. Location tba.

LEGAL WORKSHOP: RIGHTS & FAIR USE

AIVF and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts will cosponsor this workshop to cover some of the common questions faced by filmmakers: how to acquire rights to literary properties, music, and life stories, as well as the ins and outs of "fair use," including usage of news stories in media productions. The workshop will be moderated by Lawrence Sapadin, attorney and former executive director of AIVF/FIVF; attorneys and filmmaker panelists tba. *This event will be online-enhanced; questions for the panelists will be solicited on our America Online bulletin board, Artswire, and the WELL, and a full report of the event will be posted there afterwards.*

Limited to 30 participants; pre-payment required.

When: Thursday, November 17, 5:30 - 8 pm
Where: VLA Conference Room, 1 E. 53rd St., New York
Price: $20 AIVF members; $25 others

MEET AND GREETS

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.*

CYNTHIA GEHRIG
Executive Director, Jerome Foundation
Funder of fellowships for emerging independent filmmakers
Wednesday, October 19, 6:30 pm

IRA DEUTCHMAN
President, Fine Line Features
Buyer and U.S theatrical distributor of upscale, specialized films
November date tba in mid-October; call AIVF for update.

"MANY TO MANY"— MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country.

Chicago:
When: Oct. 11, Nov. 8, 7:30 pm*
Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division St.

Denver:
Call office for date and time.

Los Angeles:
When: Oct. 4, Nov. 2, 7 pm*
Where: The Abbey, 692 North Robertson Blvd., W. Hollywood
(* note new time!)

New York:
When: Oct. 18, MNov. 15, 6-8 pm
Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 2nd Ave. (9th St.)

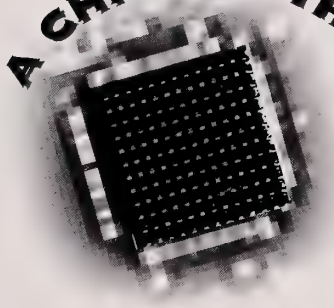
Washington DC:
When: Oct. 11, Nov. 8, 7-9 pm
Where: Four Provinces, 3412 Connecticut Ave. NW (Cleveland Metro Park stop)

BOSTON AND PHILADELPHIA MEMBER MEETINGS

AIVF will cosponsor joint member gatherings with Newtown Television Foundation and the Philadelphia Independent Film/Video Association in November. These events are intended to give

Continued on p. 51

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Letters to *The Independent* should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

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AIVF/FIVF legal counsel: Robert I. Freedman, Esq., Leavy, Rosensweig & Hyman

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* FIVF Board of Directors only

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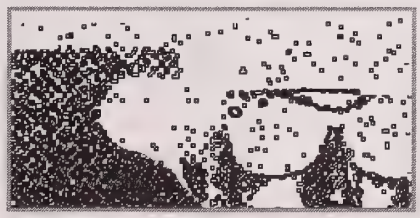
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COVER: Independent production in the Boston area is the subject of *The Independent*'s third regional spotlight. This issue presents a fisherman's platter of diverse works and voices, coming from a city with 51 academic institutions and almost as many ethnicities, which create an influx of new ideas into a city steeped in tradition. Cover map and Bostons stills p. 15 courtesy Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau.

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In the Driver's Seat

The Inouye bill—and now the Hollings bill—attempt to pave a public right of way on the information superhighway.

The information superhighway might not be a dead-end street, but in Washington, DC, at least, it appears to be running in circles. It isn't that Congress has not tried—a number of hearings were held, the House passed two bills (the National Communications Competition and Information Infrastructure Act of 1994 and the Antitrust and Communications Reform Act of 1994, which were ultimately combined), while the Senate wrestled mightily with Senator Ernest Hollings' (D-SC) massive, complex overhaul of the Communications Act of 1934. But by journey's end, the information superhighway arrived at the same destination as the health-care plan—that other windy road in Washington: Nowhere.

What a difference a year makes, a year that began with Vice President Gore singing the song of the open road—"an information superhighway that can save lives, create jobs, and give every American, young and old, the chance for the best education available to anyone anywhere." And for a moment that mythical highway became a street paved with gold, as Bell Atlantic and cable giant TCI fashioned one of the largest mergers in U.S. corporate history. But that marriage didn't pan out, the Senate legislation bogged down, and the crucial question concerning the info highway—will it be an open, two-way street like the Internet or a closed, one-way toll road like cable television?—remained unanswered.

One of the more interesting side trips along this rocky road was an effort, sponsored initially by Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and ultimately folded into the Hollings bill, to ensure a "public right of way"—to reserve a lane, in effect, for noncommercial programming on the information superhighway. "The legislation," Inouye declared upon introducing his bill, "...will ensure that all citizens of the United States have access to noncommercial, governmental, educational, informational, cultural, civic and charitable services through all appropriate telecommunications networks." Although not without precedent—the 20 percent reservation of the FM spectrum for educational broadcasting, and "PEG" (public, educational, and government) access to cable television are both models in this regard—the step was a bold one, and not without controversy.



Inouye's bill inserted a cultural perspective into the telecommunications debate.
Courtesy office of Senator Daniel Inouye

Spearheaded initially by the Association of America's Public Television Stations (APTS, which was largely concerned, not surprisingly, with protecting the interests of public broadcasters), the "Public Space on the Superhighway" movement soon expanded to include more than 90 nonprofit groups, including the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), brought together last spring under the banner of the Media Access Project/People for the American Way. In its first incarnation, Inouye's bill, the National Public Telecommunications Act of 1994, would have reserved up to 20 percent of the emerging broadband networks for use free of charge by state and local governments, educational organizations, libraries, and nonprofit organizations "created for the purpose of providing public access to noncommercial educational, informational, or cultural services." Also included in the bill is the idea of a Public Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund that would provide monies to those who obtain access to the broadband networks. Overall, the bill's importance stems from the fact that it recognized the inadequacies of the current telecommunications system and conveyed the idea that if we don't move away from the current market-driven system, things will only get worse.

Greeted first with silence and then with outrage by the telephone lobby, the public-space requirements were both diluted and clarified in the process of finding their way from Inouye's stand-alone bill (which was destined for a quiet death) into Hollings' omnibus measure (S. 1822).

First the good news. The clarification is an important one, in that it distinguishes between the current, limited-capacity networks and future systems that will transcend a finite number of available "channels." Thus for the present, nonprofit organizations would enjoy guaranteed (albeit limited) access, while in the future, with theoretically unlimited systems for which bandwidth set-aside will be unnecessary, that access would be priced at preferential rates. Although it offers a clearer picture of present needs and future possibilities, S. 1822's public-space requirements are considerably weaker than those in the Inouye bill. First, the 20-percent dream quickly became a five-percent reality (and a five-percent ceiling, at that). Second, state, local, and tribal governments, included in the original proposal, were eliminated from the final version. And third, cable television companies, which pleaded immunity by virtue of existing PEG-access and noncommercial must-carry provisions, were let off the hook entirely—as were all other telecommunications networks, including terrestrial radio stations and broadcast television stations.

In the end, the public-space requirements may be reduced to the airy language of the House bill—"the Federal Communications Commission shall prescribe regulations to reserve appropriate capacity for the public at preferential rates on cable systems and video platforms"—but even that acknowledgment of the need for a nonprofit presence on the information superhighway represents something of a victory.

The question remains, however, as to whether arts organizations and other nonprofits will be able to establish a compelling vision for a telecommu-

nications policy that assures greater access for little or no charge. The Media Democracy in Action (MeDIA) Consortium, formed in late 1993, is working toward such an end. The national consortium represents independent, minority, and community media service organizations (including AIVF, the Alliance for Community Media, and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture [NAMAC], among others) and individuals in promoting freedom of expression and advocating for equity and access in telecommunications and media arts policy.

For more information on the Consortium, contact Martha Wallner at AIVF (212) 473-3400.

GARY O. LARSON

Gary O. Larson is a writer living in Washington, DC, who wrote about NII, NREN, and the Internet for the April 1994 issue of The Independent.

Manfred Salzgeber, Programmer and Distributor, 1943-1994

With the death of Manfred Salzgeber on August 12, the world lost a true cineaste. For me, he was a kindred spirit, something filmmakers rarely say about programmers and distributors. A tireless advocate for independent cinema throughout the world, he had the soul of an artist, making no distinctions between life and work.

I first met Manfred 10 years ago, while he was on his annual Berlin Film Festival selection trip to New York. He had been a founder of the Arsenal Kino, Berlin's leading showcase for avant-garde and classic cinema, and of the Berlin International Film



Photo: Birgit Kleber

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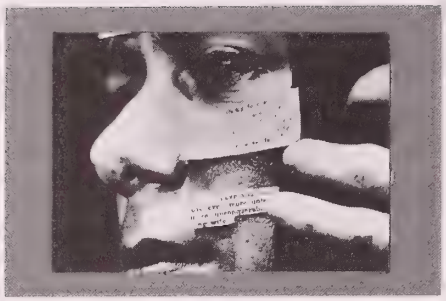
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Walter Wanger, Hollywood Independent

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Festival's Internationale Forum des Jungen Films (known as the Forum), as well as a programmer for the now defunct Nyon Documentary Film Festival. But in 1984 he was in New York seeking out films for a new section of the Berlin festival that he had initiated: the Panorama. Under Salzgeber this non-competitive section, which screens cutting-edge feature-length and short films, became the hottest ticket at the festival and a major attraction for buyers in the market for quality art house films.

Manfred launched his Berlin-based distribution company in 1985 with Artie's Bresson's final film, *Buddies*, the first narrative film about AIDS. Manfred Salzgeber Edition now distributes over 200 films, including many American independents such as Gus Van Sant's *Mala Noche*, Janet Forman's *The Beat Generation*, and Juliet Bashore's *Kamikaze Hearts*. The company has the largest European collection of films about AIDS and distributes the work of Monika Treut, Derek Jarman, and Helke Sander, among others.

In 1987 my partner Andrea Weiss and I travelled throughout Germany with Manfred and filmmakers Wieland Speck, Marc Heustis, and Tina Di Feliciantonio. Manfred had arranged a film tour, which included screenings of *Before Stonewall* as well as Di Feliciantonio's *Living with AIDS* and Huestis' *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age*, to countless German cities. The tour's purpose was to raise AIDS awareness, long before people wanted to hear about this "American" problem and before Manfred himself was diagnosed. He was a natural leader.

Manfred was born in Lodz, Poland, in 1943, shortly after the death of his father. His mother fled with him to West Germany to escape post-War Stalinism, but from the age of three he grew up in the cinema and became a citizen of the world. He could fluctuate between German, French, Dutch, and English without missing a beat. Manfred was equally at home in New York and Berlin, as I discovered one very late, hot August evening. Andrea and I were hanging out on our stoop, as New Yorkers do, watching the leather boys parade between the Chelsea bars. Along came Manfred, just off the plane from Berlin, in full regalia. He sat down to cuddle our dog, whom he loved, and to chat. We were ready for bed when he headed off to the clubs. Jet lag never even entered his consciousness.

Even during his most severe illness, Manfred never let the HIV virus slow him down. Two years ago, when he was meant to be in the hospital, Manfred was at the Babylon Kino in East Berlin introducing films and presenting 12 lectures at a gay and lesbian film series he had organized, all the while popping aspirin or drinking *sekt* to get him through the nights.

He had a sixth sense about people he cared for. Whenever I was depressed about the world, or the lack of financing for a new project, he would phone with something encouraging: an invitation to serve on a festival jury; news that a pack of wolves had been saved in Russia; or word that he was out of the hospital.

At Manfred's request, his memorial included a screening of his friend Derek Jarman's film *Blue*. We were lucky enough to be there to mourn the passing of our comrade, colleague, friend, mentor, and grand uncle of the German wing of our extended world family. As Andrea said at the memorial, "You always got more from Manfred than you could ever give him." He never wanted to be an old man, but it's hard to be glad he got his wish. Wieland Speck, who took over as director of the Panorama section in 1993, will carry on the work in addition to making his own films. Björn Koll and Kurt Kupferschmidt will run Manfred Salzgeber Editions. We filmmakers will continue to make films for everything he believed in: for life.

A memorial fund has been established in Manfred's name to further his work with AIDS films. Donations should be wired to account 390 871 7402, H. Herdege - Sonderkonto Salzgeber, Volksbank Göttingen, BLZ 260 900 50.

GRETA SCHILLER

Greta Schiller is an independent filmmaker who divides her time between New York and London. Her latest film is a half-hour narrative, Woman of the Wolf, *funded in part by ITVS and dedicated to Manfred Salzgeber.*

Industry Goes Online with The Vine

Still skeptical about the information superhighway's driver-friendliness? And what's in it for independent media artists? A job? A crew? A letter of credit? With The Vine, a new computer online service devoted to the entertainment industry, the answers are yes, yes, and definitely maybe.

Like America Online, Prodigy, and CompuServe, The Vine delivers access to all sorts of information. The difference is, it limits that access to members, most of whom are connected to the entertainment industry.

"Other public services are very broad-based and tend to emphasize fan content," says Marc Anthony Von Arx, founding partner of The Vine. "Before us there were no other services catering specifically to the industry." Von Arx, a former entertainment attorney who left the profession to become a low-budget film director, says he and partners writer Dean Moray and retired attorney Tucker Parsons started the service because once the Writer's Guild bulletin board crumbled, there was no venue for people who love movies and music. The Vine's goal is "to become the way the entertainment industry communicates with itself," says Von Arx.

The Vine was launched this spring at Showbiz Expo and has been working to expand its entertainment industry clientele steadily ever since.

Currently, the service has approximately 600 members, ranging from producers to screenwriters to cinematographers, and including a dozen or so companies. Von Arx says he has been selective about marketing because he wants to limit the service to industry insiders. He has placed advertisements in several trades, including the *Hollywood Creative Directory* and *DGA News*. However, most of The Vine's new members hear about the service from their peers, he says.

To sign on, members need only a Macintosh or PC and a modem. The Vine provides users with specialized software. The service offers four quarterly or annual membership plans, which range in price from $36 to $120 per quarter. Members can opt for Internet access, which allows them to participate in UserNet discussion groups and send e-mail outside of The Vine.

Goods and services are available online as well. The American Film Institute (AFI) holds registration for classes and sells tickets to its screenings through the Vine.

Other organizations post information about membership, seminars, and conferences, including the International Documentary Association and the American Cinema Editors (ACE). The Vine offers public and private conferencing, a resumé database (which was wiped out during the L.A. earthquake and has yet to be replenished), a variety of entertainment-related facts and figures (e.g. Nielsen ratings and box office grosses), as well as a chance to exchange information and opportunities. The user-friendly instructions are concise and entertaining in their own right.

Graphics are state-of-the-art, and plans are in the works for a photo database that could be up and running by the fall. "It will be accessible and searchable in an infinite number of categories," says Von Arx. "It'll also be great for filmmakers casting a production." State film commissions could include location shots and, because the service is worldwide, information on locations outside the U.S. could also be stored.

Through The Vine's bulletin board, media artists can also introduce a sampling of their latest work, be it animation, music, art, or a multimedia creation. With some additional software, it will also be possible for users to post and view a short reel of a director's or cinematographer's work.

Most users can become experts after one session. If not, The Vine has a customer service staff to respond to questions. For more information, call The Vine at (213) 957-1990.

JULIA ROBINSON SHIMIZU

Julia Robinson Shimizu is a Los Angeles writer who divides her free time between movies, museums, and naps.

Reeling at Minneapolis' Red Eye Theater

Like amateur magicians or startup stand-up comedians, fledging filmmakers in the Twin Cities now have a way to see how their material plays for an audience. Following the basic formula of a night-club "open stage," the Red Eye Theater in Minneapolis last August initiated an ongoing series of "Open Reel" nights. The events, overseen by Red Eye media curator Matt Bakkom, are simply structured. Anyone who wants to show a film or video production need only arrive a half-hour early. On a first-come, first-serve basis, Bakkom schedules the evening's screenings, sight unseen.

There are no quality or content criteria for Open Reel acceptance. Red Eye is equipped with 16mm and super 8 film projectors and a VHS video projector, but with the right amount of notice, even those boundaries can be broken. On one recent occasion, filmmaker Amelie Collins demonstrated the capabilties of her Magic Lantern, a 19th century precursor of the movie projector designed to operate with candlelight.

Open Reel evenings occur about once every other month and include showings of up to a dozen different works. Presenters usually show around 15 minutes of work, then interact with the audience in a brief discussion period. Filmmakers ask viewers for responses, answer questions about artistic intentions, or both, offering an alternative for traditional film exhibition formats.

"Frequently the artist doesn't exist in the same space as the audience," says Bakkom, "so there's no emotion between them. People can be moved by a film but not necessarily have interaction with it. This is an attempt to give something you can't have from your TV screen that I think people want deeply."

Also unusual is the opportunity for artists to show works-in-progress. Filmmakers often bring pieces to Open Reel before they're finished to get an early sense of audience reaction. Screenwriter Jeane Moore brought her unfinished film *Death's Wife* to a recent session. The screening was the film's first public exposure. "The script has been read by many people, most of whom knew me beforehand," she says. "I really wanted the cold reaction of people who knew nothing about it."

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At Minneapolis' Red Eye Theater, filmmaker Amelie Collins recently demonstrated the capabilties of a movie projector designed to operate with candlelight. Photo: Scott Briggs

Viewers gave *Death's Wife* a warm response, but that encouragement wasn't the only benefit of the evening for the artists involved. "I was actually more surprised by what it did to me," admits the film's director Dean Hyers. "I haven't watched the rough cut in several weeks, and I've never seen it on a big screen. I was just amazed at how different it was."

Open Reel also gives filmmakers a chance to examine each others' work. "Just the exposure to what other people in the community are doing is invaluable," said Kim Hyers, script consultant for *Death's Wife*. That exposure is just as valuable for audience members who are not media artists. John Sherrell, co-owner of the Coffee Gallery, was simply on-site to sell refreshments during a recent Open Reel evening, but he couldn't resist getting his two cents in during post-screening discussions. "The idea is not to be bashful—to put out your ideas," he explained. "That's the fun of it."

Open Reel is only one facet of a full film and video exhibition program at Red Eye, a theater that has long incorporated multimedia elements into its live dramatic productions. As media curator, Bakkom presents an eclectic mix of vintage cinema and contemporary work. Often his most successful screenings include input from the local creative community. A series of double features paired seminal works by international filmmaking pioneers with new similarly themed pieces by Twin-Cities artists. Several silent films were screened recently with accompaniment by improvised or newly composed live music.

Bakkom believes such combinations are necessary these days to fill the seats. "A lot of people won't come to see a film that is available on video,' he says. "There has to be another element to the program... This kind of cross-fertilization between different art forms really creates a beautiful program."

SCOTT BRIGGS

Scott Briggs is a freelance writer living in Minneapolis.

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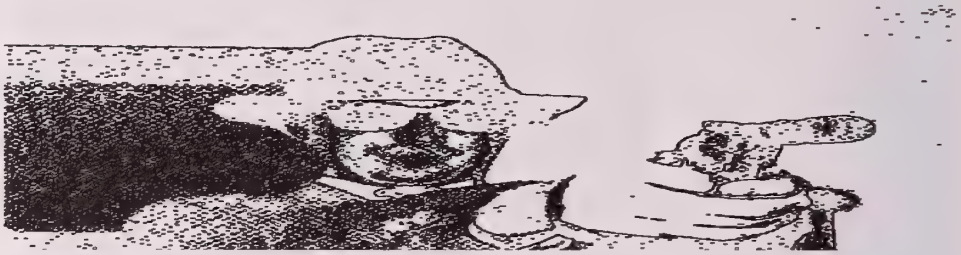
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Or, How to Prevent Documentary Poaching

"So how do I stop them from stealing the idea for my film?" This question was posed to me by a client who had begun production on a science documentary. He had already spent a significant amount of time and money writing the script and obtaining commitments from the various participants, and he was about to meet with a cash-flush production company interested in a coproduction deal. The filmmaker was concerned the other company would hear him out, politely turn him down, then produce the documentary without him.

Unfortunately, his concerns were valid. Unless the production company was willing to agree not to use the filmmaker's idea without his consent, he was at risk. The reason: while the particular *expression* of an idea (as found, say, in a book or film) is protected by copyright law, the idea itself is not. Thus, the other company would be free to appropriate my client's idea and make the film on their own.

Luckily in this instance I had a good relationship with the principals of the production company, and they were willing to sign an agreement that prohibited them from producing a documentary based upon my client's ideas unless he was involved. Thus, this filmmaker was able to contractually obtain protection not afforded by copyright law. Such contractual protections are not, however, the norm. Producers, particularly those making documentaries, must live with the reality that somebody else may make "their" film. After all, the facts upon which a documentary is based are typically public domain and fair game for anyone. This being the case, what could my client have done had he not been able to obtain an agreement? And either way, what could he do to prevent other producers from making a competing film?

In certain respects, the problem is the same whether the film is documentary or fiction. Just as anyone can produce a documentary about the homeless, so too can anyone make a film featuring two policemen who, though initially disliking each other, become the best of friends. In either case, the idea underlying the work, be it fact or fiction, is up for grabs.

Once completed, however, the fictional piece does enjoy certain protections not available to a documentary. Consider the film *Lethal Weapon*. Director/coproducer Richard Donner could not expect to prevent somebody else from making a film featuring mismatched police officers. However, in making *Lethal Weapon*, Donner created specific characters (officers Murtaugh and Riggs) which no one else can use. Even without duplicate characters, if another film contained enough elements similar to the *Lethal Weapon* films, a claim for copyright infringement might be found. [See "The Write Stuff: Legal Protection for Screenwriters," November 1993, for information on protecting dramatic screenplays.]

Contrast this with a documentary, say, on Prohibition. Although the footage used by a filmmaker might be proprietary to him or her, the documentary's "characters" are not. Thus, it would seem that once a film has been made, the fictional work enjoys greater protection than the documentary.

But there are measures documentary makers can take to protect their work that are not available to a producer of fiction. One is an exclusivity agreement with a project's sources. Suppose someone wishes to produce a film about a well known artist. In order to make the film, the producer gains the cooperation of the artist, as well as her friends, relatives, and business acquaintances. Beyond gaining their cooperation, the producer should, if possible, obtain the exclusive rights to these individuals' stories. The film's sources would agree not to aid or provide information to any other person who wished to produce a movie on the same subject. Such an agreement would certainly have a chilling effect on the ability of other filmmakers to produce competing documentaries.

Of course, without up-front payment the parties involved might be reluctant to grant any rights, exclusive or otherwise. Assuming such funds are not available, the filmmaker could instead seek to obtain exclusive rights for a limited duration, similar to an option agreement for fiction works. For instance, the rights could be granted for some fixed period of time, say six months, in exchange for a promise of payment once production funds are obtained. If payment is made within six months, the subject would be prevented from cooperating with any other party, either indefinitely or for some further period. If, however, payment is not made within the time limit, the film's subject would be free to talk to or make a deal with anyone else. While such an arrangement won't completely forestall the possibility of a competing film being made, it will provide the producer with a significant advantage of a certain period of time.

There are additional reasons for obtaining the cooperation of the subjects of a documentary, separate and apart from the issue of exclusivity. Perhaps most important is avoiding accusations of libel, invasion of privacy, or other like claims. Generally it is difficult for the subject of a documentary to obtain damages for such claims, particularly if he or she is a public figure. The plaintiff would have to prove malice or reckless disregard for the truth, depending on the jurisdiction. In the case of a private figure, however, the standard might simply be negligence on the part of the pro-

ducer.

In any event, the goal of the producer is to prevent litigation altogether. The simplest means of doing so is to include a release in any agreement with the subjects of the documentary. Basically, the release provisions would 1) grant the producer immunity from any claims the subject might make, and 2) acknowledge that the producer can use his or her discretion in portraying the subject. For the sake of maintaining a good relationship, the filmmaker could also agree to consult with the subject regarding the manner in which he or she is portrayed. However, it should then be made clear that all editorial decisions are ultimately at the filmmaker's discretion.

Admittedly, such agreements and releases may be of little help when a documentary does not feature living individuals. For instance, what options are there if the focus of the film is some aspect of the Civil War? One possible avenue is to take steps to protect one's research. This can be particularly important if significant time has been spent gathering facts, or if the research has resulted in a novel theory which forms the basis for the film.

Unfortunately, in this area copyright law again offers little help. Although the courts are not in complete agreement, generally it has been held that the results of one's research, like ideas, are not subject to copyright protection. In fact, in New York the courts have stated that even novel theories are not protected.

It is therefore important to be extremely careful to keep research confidential and show it only to those with a need to know. If the research must be shared, then any disclosure, even if verbal, should be made in tandem with the execution of a confidentiality agreement. If this is not practical, then disclosure should be accompanied by or followed up with a letter making clear the recipient's confidentiality obligations. While this isn't a complete shield, it can form the basis of a fiduciary relationship with the recipient and cause them to think twice before appropriating the disclosed material.

Ultimately, a filmmaker needs to use common sense and good judgment. Certainly in the early stages of production there may be no choice but to trust that the person across the table is not fishing for ideas for his or her own film. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that protective measures are available at many stages in the production process and that blind faith need not be the only recourse. Moreover, while potential partners may be unwilling to sign confidentiality or other agreements during the early stages of negotiations, it is reasonable and customary to enter into such agreements once you start working together.

Stephen M. Goldstein is an entertainment lawyer practicing in New York City.

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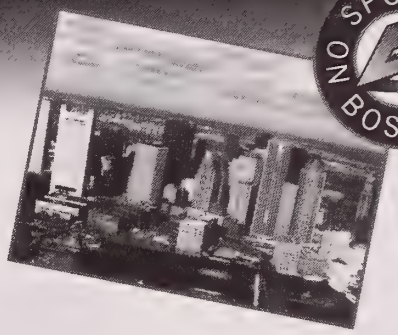
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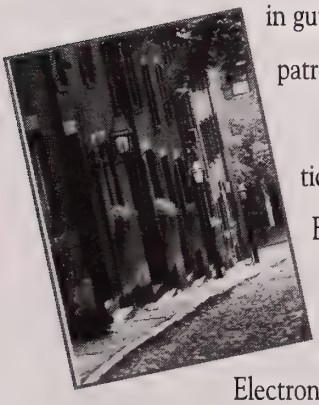
SPOTLIGHT ON BOSTON

Here's Boston

BOSTON, LIKE ANY CITY WORTH ITS SALT, IS DEFINED BY ITS CONTRADICTIONS. HOME OF THE PURITAN AND THE BLUESTOCKING, ITS THINKING IS FRESHENED BY AN EVER-REPLENISHED POPULATION OF STUDENTS, AND ITS PROGRESSIVE POLITICS HAVE BEEN THE STUFF OF BUMPER STICKERS SINCE PAUL REVERE COINED "ONE IF BY LAND."



It's an entry point for new ideas and a society steeped in tradition and a rigid pecking order. Rich Boston merchants were funding the arts before most of the country was settled, but Massachusetts recently led the nation in gutting its state arts budget, and the city of Boston has never offered more than token patronage.



Here you'll find the Freedom Trail cheek-to-jowl with high tech firms; chauvinistic ethnic neighborhoods crossed by boulevards dripping with Euro-chic; Boston Brahmins rubbing shoulders—sometimes the wrong way—with new arrivals from around the globe; the snobbish, intolerant, and closed-minded butting up against the curious, inventive, and forward-looking.

In a city where status depends on where you went to school and what you've published, Lotus founder and Electronic Frontier Foundation head Mitch Kapor has bought a mansion built by a Cabot—and as we know, the Cabots talked only to God.

Boston is not an easy-going place; our winters and Protestant ethic are too raw for that. We seem to thrive on dispute; about all we can agree upon is that Boston drivers are outrageous and it's time for the Red Sox to win the World Series again—two more things that won't change soon.

What follows is a chorus of voices—not always in tune—and a collage of images—some fleeting, others impressing themselves on our awareness again and again. It's an on-the-one-hand-on-the-other reckoning, not meant to be exhaustive; we pride ourselves on having too rich a film culture for that. It's a smorgasbord then, or maybe a fisherman's platter. Sample and enjoy.

NAN LEVINSON, GUEST EDITOR



Boston Uncommon

Comings and goings: Errol Morris, America's premiere postmodern documentarian, is one of those who followed the path from New York to Cambridge. Film still from his upcoming *Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control*, a nonfiction feature profiling a topiary gardener, and ex-lion tamer, a Naked Mole Rat photographer, and an insect robotics scientist.

Photo: Nubar Alexanian, courtesy Fourth Floor Productions

By Gerald Peary

What's good about independent production in Boston? Film- and videomakers are accessible, intelligent, socially aware, and willing to share information and equipment: "Take my Avid, please!" Boston Film and Video Foundation (BF/VF) remains a center for media activity and responsive to Boston's evermore multicultural communities. Local venues—the Museum of Fine Arts, Harvard Film Archive, Coolidge Corner Theater, Brattle Theater—actually compete to exhibit low-budget films.

What's bad about Boston? There's very little gay and lesbian filmmaking, and experimental work is rarely screened, except within the Massachusetts College of Art and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. There's pitiful government support; the bottom fell out of the Massachusetts Cultural Council a few years ago, though indications are that some funding will be restored next year. BF/VF's state arts funding, reports executive director Anne Marie Stein, dipped from a high of $45,000 to $6,750 this year.

Who goes, who stays? Dan Eisenberg, a respected experimental documentarian (*Displaced Person*, *Cooperation of Parts*) has been in Boston since 1978, but he's leaving to chair the film department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Eisenberg explains, "Other places are more committed to bringing in experimental filmmakers than Boston. Chicago has more venues, more funding, and definitely a more lively film scene."

A monograph was published in Berlin devoted to analyzing Eisenberg's work. In Boston, he has toiled for years as an editor at PBS affiliate WGBH without being offered his own project. "The ultimate irony is that WGBH has had working for it many of the best filmmakers in Boston and never let them make films," he says.

But others stay to do exciting new work: David Sutherland does wonderfully idiosyncratic films, most recently a 1994 documentary "noir," *Out of Sight*, about a tough-as-nails, lying blind woman. First-time videomaker Stephanie Homan's *The Rules of Dying* shows the grueling marital months when her late husband, a needle-sharer, succumbed to AIDS. Alice Stone's crowd-rousing feature, *She Lives to Ride*, celebrates women on motorcycles.

Meanwhile, others arrive. Brad Anderson went to film school in London and moved to Boston two years ago to be a filmmaker: Boston, not New York or L.A. "My sister lived here," he explains, "and it's a cheap place to stay. Anyway, why go where everyone is competing? In Boston, you can rapidly find your cohorts, and there's lots of filmmaking going on, bucking the system."

Anderson is shooting *The Darien Gap*, a $60,000 feature "about how divorce affects the twentysomething generation, about how this guy wants to escape Boston for the Pan-American Highway." He's hardly the only X-era cineaste getting behind the camera. "I can name 10 people doing features

here, with or without the money, inspired by low-budget movies like *El Mariachi* and *Slackers* to 'go for it.'"

How has the terrain changed? Nowadays, dramatic fiction films heavily outnumber documentaries. When I came to Boston in 1978, probably four-fifths of local production was nonfiction. There were a dozen young and gifted documentarians—Ross McElwee, Robb Moss, Alexandra Anthony, and Steve Ascher, for instance—who made films through MIT's Film Section, which was headed by Richard Leacock, cinema verité guru. For many, the potent professorial force at MIT was Ed Pincus, who turned a 16mm camera on his own intense, chaotic life for the four-hour opus *The Diaries*.

Robb Moss, here seen in his film *The Tourist*, has passed on MIT's "personal documentary" tradition to the next generation of students.
Courtesy filmmaker



Pincus's post-sixties, confessional style was an influential model for a patented Boston-area specialty, the "personal documentary." Another paradigm was offered by Harvard professor Alfred Guzzetti, whose investigations of his family (*Family Portrait Sittings*, *Scenes from Childhood*) were more distanced, self-reflexive, formally elegant. Robert Gardner, the highly regarded ethnographic filmmaker (*Dead Birds*, *Forest of Bliss*), also worked out of Harvard's Carpenter Center.

Away from the universities, Bostonians made well-received documentaries of social conscience, such as *The Good Fight* (1983), directed by Mary Dore, Sam Sills, and Noel Buckner, honoring American veterans of the Spanish Civil War. And there were the inimitable documentaries of Frederick Wiseman, whose slash-and-burn visits to American institutions (*High School*, *Titicut Follies*, *Welfare*, *Primates*, etc.) were as devilishly pessimistic as the oeuvre of Luis Buñuel.

In the 15 years since MIT's Film Section shut its doors, Leacock moved to Paris, where he's consumed by Hi8. Pincus dropped out of academia and filmmaking. What's now at MIT is cryptic, high-tech, interactive Media Lab stuff, ahead of the universe, but no longer part of the film world.

But American's premiere postmodern documentarian, Errol Morris (*The Thin Blue Line*), moved his production offices from New York to Cambridge, where he made *A Brief History of Time* and, recently, pilots for Fox and ABC.

Meanwhile, Ross McElwee turned sort of famous with his genial autobiographical road documentaries, *Sherman's March* and *Time Indefinite*. McElwee and his MIT colleague (and AIVF board member) Robb Moss (*Africa Revisited* and *The Tourist*) became filmmaking faculty at Harvard. They brought MIT's "personal documentary" form to the undergraduates in Visual and Environmental Studies (VES), which, Moss says, is "not a film school. It's filmmaking in a liberal arts context, where students think about the world with cameras and tape recorders, freed from the marketplace."

Yet somehow the insular world of VES documentary-making also can help make studio directorial inroads. Reginald Hudlin (*House Party*), Dan Algrant (*Naked in New York*), and Mira Nair (*Mississippi Masala*) are all VES grads.

Which brings us to perhaps the biggest change. In contrast to all the film- and videomakers who put Boston high on the list of documentary towns in the seventies and eighties, only Cambridge's Jan Egleson (*Billy in the Lowlands*, *The Little Sister*) forged a successful career directing fiction films. Now Boston has gone narrative-crazy with the realization that doing a scripted film with a nonunion cast can actually be cheaper than shooting a documentary.

"Savings are pretty dramatic," explains Sam Kauffmann, chair of Broadcast and Film at Boston University. "Your shooting ratios for narrative are so much less. For a documentary, it's 10:1, 20:1, but with a carefully scripted and rehearsed fiction film, it can be 2:1, 3:1."

BU's graduate filmmaking program (the only one in New England) made a reputation for PBS-quality documentaries, culminating in the 1979 Oscar for Roland Halle and Peter Ladue's *Karl Hess: Toward Liberty*. Since the late eighties, 80 percent of the films—including professional-level thesis work—have been narrative. For instance, Hilary Weisman, 24, a recent BU grad, completed an acclaimed feature-length narrative, *Life's Too Good*, a streamlined, Hal Hartley-style tale about three female generations of a middle-class Massachusetts family.

Meanwhile, Pamela Berger is back. A Boston College art history professor who wrote and directed the popular Jewish-American drama *The Imported Bridegroom* in 1989, Berger has written and directed a new historical drama, *Kilian's Chronicle*. It concerns, she says, "an Irish slave who escapes from a Viking ship 500 years before Columbus and ends in a village of Native Americans. It's shot in



While some mediamakers are leaving Boston, others find it offers quite green pastures, like David Sutherland, maker of the documentary *Out of Sight*, about a lying, cheating blind woman.
Courtesy filmmaker

Massachusetts with a lot of talented people willing to work for modest recompense, but with participation deals. If the film does well, all will do well."

As a Boston-area resident since the sixties, super 8 guru Toni Treadway has seen the local landscape shift over the years. "It's more diverse than it used to be," says Treadway, copartner with Bob Brodsky of the Rowley-based International Center for 8mm Film and Video. "Twenty years ago, there were people in the documentary vein; people in the experimental wild, loft scene; people doing animation; a few people doing features. Now there's much more cross-pollination. There's experimental documentaries; wild music people who are also working on feature scripts; animators working in the industry; super 8 people who have real jobs as grips by day. Though there's much more flux between the genres, says Treadway, "there's a certain seriousness and dedication to the work that's really a shared ethic, without being a stated ethic."

Gerald Peary teaches film studies at Suffolk University and Boston University and is film critic for The Improper Bostonian.

Experimentation without Representation

SPOTLIGHT BOSTON

Experimental Media

With few venues and sparse funding, Boston's underground experimentalists nevertheless keep the avant-garde tradition alive.

By George Fifield

Who would think the supposedly staid city of Boston has a wild experimental media arts scene? It does, though one has to work a bit to find it. One of the major engines driving the culture and life of this New England city is an influx of college students every fall, which expands our population and our minds. As a result, experimental music, art, and media are taught in schools and explored in dark clubs and small artist-run spaces year-round.

But the reception experimental media receive from the mainstream art world and Boston press is as chilly as a New England winter. So checking the local newspaper listings is not the best way to get a sense of the city's alternative media scene, which can "feel like a bomb dropped and people were at ground zero," according to Tony Oursler, one of Boston's better known video artists. "Why do you think they call it the underground?" adds filmmaker Andrew Neumann. Only recently are there signs that things are changing.

Years ago, Boston was one of the most important centers of experimental television in the country, with WGBH poised at the forefront from the early sixties to the eighties. In 1964 Fred Barzyk, a WGBH producer, started exploring the frontiers of art and television experimentation, starting with a show called *Jazz Images*. During the sixties he produced a series of programs that established WGBH as one of the key centers for the first generation of video artists, along with WNET-New York and KCET-San Francisco. By 1967, an artists-in-residence program was established at WGBH, supported by monies from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations. Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Center for Advanced Visual Studies attracted artists from around the world, and many of them participated in WGBH's forays into experimental video.

In 1974 the New Television Workshop was founded at WGBH, offering production facilities and a weekly video art program, *Artists' Showcase*. Under Barzyk's direction, it became a creative laboratory through which hundreds of artists trooped, some producing their most significant work. It attracted video artists from around the country, including Peter Campos, Bill Viola, William Wegman, and Nam June Paik, who built the first Paik-Abe video synthesizer at WGBH. The majority of residents, however, were Boston artists, including Betsy Conners, Jane Hudson, Ellen Sebring, and Bill Seaman. Hudson, who now runs the video art department at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, remembers the workshop fondly: "They were an outlet for work. Local artists produced it, and they showed it."

During the sixties and seventies, a strong experimental film community thrived in Boston. Early on, in an old synagogue in Boston's South End, an exhibition program called Cinémathèque showed avant-garde films. Harvard Film Society and the MIT Film Society, the latter run by a student filmmaker named Fred Camper, had great experimental and documentary series. Seminal experimental filmmakers such as Bruce Conner, Dan Barnett, Margorie Keller, and Andy Meyer lived in the area. And at MIT, there was Ricky Leacock, "one of the singular figures in Boston film culture," according to experimental filmmaker and teacher Saul Levine. His program at the Film Study Center, while more cinema verité oriented, also encouraged experimentation in video and avant-garde super 8 filmmaking.

During the eighties, Boston area mediamakers saw funding opportunities and exhibition venues grow—and then wither. The decade began with a setback: the New Television Workshop closed its production facilities in 1980. But within a few years, it embarked on two new and important collaborations. The first started in 1983, when New Television Workshop director Susan Dowling joined with David Ross, then director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, to create the Contemporary Art Television (CAT) Fund.

Under the direction of Kathy Rae Huffman, the CAT Fund produced or coproduced between one and four projects a year, with budgets of up to $100,000 each. With grant money and help from WGBH and the ICA, the fund supported national and international artists, such as Bill Viola, Ken Feingold, Raul Ruiz and Marcel Odenbach. It also helped Boston-area video artists, including Kathy Izzo, Ellen Sebring, Teddy Dibble, and Bill Seaman.

The New Television Workshop also began a collaboration with WNET, coproducing the video art series *New Television*. The series began on



WNET in 1986 with four shows, then WGBH joined as coproducer in 1987 for its first 13-show season. In 1991 it was nationally syndicated and carried by 75 PBS affiliates. When WGBH closed the New Television Workshop in 1993, they stopped their co-involvement. (The series still airs today, produced by Connecticut Public Television and the Wexner Center in Columbus, Ohio.)

Meanwhile, funding organizations had discovered the concept of the local media center, and the Boston Film/Video Foundation thrived as a result. Founded in 1976 as an alliance of independent filmmakers, experimental filmmakers, and video artists, BF/VF's purpose was twofold: to provide low cost equipment to artists and to run a screening program. Initially it bought some excellent 16mm film equipment from the MIT Center for Engineering. In 1978, the video equipment from the New Television Workshop production facilities were given to BF/VF.



BF/VF then received a grant for a screening series from the National Endowment for the Arts. First programmed by Steve Anker and then by Julie Levinson, this excellent and important series often had audiences lining up out the door throughout the eighties. BF/VF became the focal point where media artists, students, and faculty from various educational institutions came together. Important artists from all over the country brought ideas and work to the small screening room at BF/VF, sometimes to great acclaim and sometimes to ridicule, but always to an interested and vocal audience. Performance artists were also invited, including Jack Smith, Spalding Gray, and Laurie Anderson. "Steve Anker was a champion of local filmmakers" recalls Saul Levine, and BF/VF was the place to see the work of the New England community of media artists. There is nothing like it today.

Rapid-fire cutting distinguishes Saul Levine's *New Left Note*, on the anti-war, anti-racist and women's lib movements of seventies. Levine's exhibition series at the Massachusetts College of Art was the backbone of Boston's experimental scene for many years.
Courtesy filmmaker

Within BF/VF, subgroups appeared. An important one was Subterranean Video Group, or "Svidiots," as they called themselves, which grew up around the Sandin image processor built by Bob Raymond and others. Svid member Charles Jevremovic and Lisa Monrose later started the DANGR VDO group, an experimental production outfit which produced early music videos for groups like the Throwing Muses. Red Alert, curated by Kathy Izzo and Penelope Place, was another important screening series combining punk videos, music, and performance art.

But funding dried up during the eighties and the difficulty of maintaining the money pit of equipment took its toll. Obsolete equipment could not be replaced, and the exhibition series became sporadic, lost their audiences, and finally ended. At the same time, the growth of public access TV took away potential members. Today it serves primarily as a media vocational function, providing low-cost training for independent producers.

There is still a thriving community of experimental media artists in Boston, but they are mostly centered at three institutions: MIT, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Massachusetts College of Art. Though MIT closed the Center for Advanced Visual Studies this year, multimedia and video continue to be explored at the Media Lab under the direction of Gloriana Davenport. At the Museum School, Jane and Jeff Hudson run the video art department they originally set up in 1974 with $1,100. The Museum School also has an excellent experimental film department.

The Massachusetts College of Art has three full-time experimental film teachers, an important video art department headed by Tony Oursler, plus computer and experimental multimedia projects. Mass Art filmmaker Saul Levine is the avant-garde film guru of Boston, and his Mass Art Film Society has been one of the consistent exhibitors of experimental film in the region.

Boston has always been a place where technology and art come together. It is no surprise that a number of talented video artists have started projects using new technologies: for example, Sarah Smiley's *Virtual Beret* project on the Internet, which asks people from all over the world to invent imaginary artists, then describe them, their art, and their head gear; or Amatul Hannan's virtual reality project *North Water World*.

Möbius, an artist-run performance and exhibition space, stages live performances that incorporate media—creating multimedia pieces in the old sense of the term. From work like T. W. Li's *Broadcast Live* and Bob Raymond and Marilyn Arsem's *Living in Sin(e)*, to more recent projects like Andrew Neumann's *Hard Target Practice*, Möbius remains an important performance venue.

Boston is home to a number of video installation artists, including Denise Marika, Tony Oursler, and Annie Spilios Scott. Video installations are shown in a few galleries and museums around town, notably the Howard Yezerski Gallery and the now defunct Artists Foundation Gallery, which recently featured video installation work by the Benson Brothers, John Russell, and Dena Gwen.

Recently, a few more places have shown interest in media arts, and audiences have followed. Bruce Posner, assistant to the curator at the Harvard Film Archive, has been showing more local experimental film and video. Two programs have grown out of the series this author ran at the Space, an artists-run alternative arts center: VideoSpace at the ICA provides monthly video art programming at the Institute of Contemporary Art. (ICA video curator Branka Bogdanov has been increasing the number of local video artists shown at that institution, after a long dry spell in the later eighties and early nineties.) There's also VideoSpace at DeCordova, a collaboration between the Space and the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in suburban Lincoln, which is committed to becoming a major regional media arts center.

Nevertheless, funding remains thin on the ground, and exhibition venues for local work remain few and far between. Says Saul Levine, "Experimental filmmakers in Boston have always existed on the margins and the junk piles." The schools continue to inspire and produce talented artists every year, but Boston still lacks that center around which this body of talent can spin.

George Fifield is a Jamaica Plain-based video artist and video curator at the Space. He currently produces VideoSpace at DeCordova and VideoSpace at the ICA.

Documentary

an Alternative Universe

From the personal to the political, documentary has thrived in Boston.

BY JANE FEINBERG

While Boston is commonly known as a kind of mecca for documentary filmmaking, one cannot point to a single documentary community. It is rather a constellation of orbits, an alternative universe that would confound both Ptolemy and Copernicus. Although there is no consensus (and surprisingly little concern) as to who resides at its center, there does seem to be some agreement as to what distinguishes this universe from others.



Nina Davenport carries on Boston's personal documentary tradition with her first film, *Hello Photo*, shot in India.
Courtesy filmmaker

The commonly acknowledged Creation Story of Boston documentary filmmaking goes something like this: In the beginning—the early sixties to the late seventies—there was public television station WGBH; the university film programs, perhaps most notably the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Film Laboratory; and a handful of independent souls working alone.

MIT & Co.

"MIT was the only place in the country that I could find that took nonfiction seriously and that was camera-centered, rather than story-centered," recalls Robb Moss, a native Californian who came to MIT in the mid-seventies. At that time MIT's two luminaries—Ed Pincus and Richard Leacock—were pioneering a genre that came to be known as diary filmmaking. One of their first students was Ross McElwee, whose breakthrough documentary, *Sherman's March*, has become something of a cult film.

"MIT was chaotic," McElwee recalls. "We were always arguing and debating....We were sent out in the world with cameras and told to come back in a month when we had something. We edited in a large room with three Steenbecks going simultaneously, screaming at one another to turn the volume down when the headsets weren't working. It was a fermenting time, a fomenting time."

When the MIT Film and Video Laboratory dribbled to a close in the mid-eighties, a number of faculty and students, including Moss and McElwee, moved to the Carpenter Center at Harvard, where they continued to make diary films and nurture new talent. A recent protégé is Nina Davenport, an anomaly in a younger generation inclined toward Hollywood. Davenport has just finished her first film, a documentary titled *Hello, Photo*. McElwee calls it "completely uncompromised, a difficult film...an eloquent film, a disturbing one.... She has the same spirit that I remember from that period in the seventies."

WBGH Then and Now

During the MIT Film Lab heyday and only a mile away, WGBH was crafting a very different kind of documentary—one loosely modeled on work coming out of the BBC. Text- and story-driven, the films developed a grammar that, to a large extent, continues to this day.

"In the late sixties and early seventies, WGBH was producing more film

Continued on p. 22

CARMA HINTON & RICHARD GORDON
documentarians
ONE VILLAGE IN CHINA

By Julie Levinson



Courtesy filmmakers

The Long Bow Group, Richard Gordon and Carma Hinton's production company, takes its name from the remote village in China that is the site of most of their films. Their 1987 trilogy, collectively titled *One Village in China*, is a unique document of rural life, focusing on the denizens of Long Bow as they come to grips with the upheavals of recent Chinese history. Unlike most documentaries about China—made under the watchful eye of the government or cobbled together by strangers in a strange land—Gordon and Hinton's films present an authentic insider's view for a Western audience.

What makes this possible is Hinton's unusual history: She was born in China to American parents and grew up there as a self-described "fourth worlder." Her father, William Hinton, was the author of *Fanshen*, the classic account of land reform in China during the 1940s, depicted through the microcosm of Long Bow. Carma accompanied her father to the village for the first time in 1971, serving as his translator while he researched his follow-up book on Long Bow, *Shenfan*. Since then, she and Gordon, whom she met at the University of Pennsylvania, visited Long Bow several times on their own, establishing relationships with the people who would become the subjects of their films.

As Hinton tells it, she more or less fell into filmmaking. "When we used to visit there, we had no idea of making a film. We were visiting old friends who were like family." Gordon, a still photographer also trained in cinematography, would take candid, unposed pictures of the villagers, which were a far cry from the official portraits they were used to seeing. When Gordon and Hinton witnessed the ancient art of Chinese stilt-dancing, they realized that still photography could not do justice to its vitality, so they embarked on their first film, *Stilt Dancers*, in 1981. They went on to shoot the Long Bow trilogy: *Small Happiness*, about the status of women in Chinese society; *To Taste a Hundred Herbs*, on Chinese medicine; and *All Under Heaven*, about land reform and the changes in the town over several decades. They also produced *First Moon*, a short film about the Chinese New Year celebration.

"Having seen some of the other reports from China, I thought it was portrayed as such a distant culture," says Gordon. "The people just didn't seem human. Everyone seemed very cold, no one had a sense of humor, no one was relaxed. Part of our motivation was just trying to reveal ordinary people."

Other films on China "exoticized and stereotyped the Chinese," Hinton continues. "Most were Western interpretations; there were always masses swarming through the streets, but you didn't get to know one Chinese individual. So in our approach to making films about Long Bow, we tried to get very close to the people and see what they thought about their lives."

In spite of their privileged access to their subjects, Hinton and Gordon still struggle to achieve authentic representations. Although they avoid narration as much as possible, Hinton speaks of the need to use some voiceover. "We try to give people their due by including as much of their own thoughts as possible. But in making a film for Americans about China, there is a lot of knowledge that we can't assume. If we try to explain too much, it becomes boring. It's a thin line to walk as to when to provide some basic information."

This was a particular challenge in their most recently completed film, *Abode of Illusion* (1993), a posthumous portrait of painter Chang Dai-ch'ien who was also, in Gordon's words, "arguably the greatest forger of all time." Hinton, who is finishing a doctorate at Harvard in art history, notes that "To make a film about a Western artist, you can assume a lot of cultural understanding already. Whereas to talk about a Chinese artist, you almost have to start with the materials they paint with. You have to set the stage."

In their current project, a three-hour film tentatively titled *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, Hinton and Gordon are using the democracy movement of 1989 as a window to key issues of modern Chinese history. Gordon considers the Tiananmen Square uprising "one of the most widely seen and widely misunderstood events ever."

In their effort to get at the complex background behind the image of a man facing down a tank, the Long Bow Group has undertaken a huge acquisition and analysis process. Along with their editor David Carnochan and coproducer Orville Schell, the noted China scholar, Hinton and Gordon are combing through a welter of documentation from sources ranging from U.S. network news to the Chinese version of MTV. Gordon claims that, "Having watched hundreds of hours of actual broadcast coverage, I have not seen more than 10 minutes of actual Chinese people speaking."

Combining Hinton and Gordon's interviews with the eclectic holdings of their newly created archive of footage, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* should transport audiences far beyond the simplicities of the evening news—proving once again that there are many paths to filmic heaven.

Stilt Dancers and the Long Bow trilogy *One Village in China* are available from Kathy Kline, 617 West End Ave., New York, NY 10024; (212) 724-9302. *Abode of Illusion* is available from Direct Cinema, Box 10003, Santa Monica, CA 90410; (800) 525-0000.

Julie Levinson teaches film history at Babson College and is producer/curator of the cable television series Mixed Signals.

programming than any other PBS station in the country," says McElwee. "Almost all of that was nonfiction. A lot of it was...pretty formulaic...but at least they were sending camera crews out in the field to deal with real people and real situations."

In the days when film reigned supreme at WGBH, Lynn Farnell, head of the film production unit, had an eye for talent. From a pool of assistant editors (positions that no longer exist) she helped create a community of skilled artisans who continue to be among the most sought after and who have remained close friends.

Jeanne Jordan was part of that crew. Jordan and her husband, Steve Ascher (coauthor of *The Filmmaker's Handbook*), are blending Ascher's MIT training in autobiographical narrative with Jordan's work in public TV to produce *Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern*. It is the story of Jordan's parent's attempt to save the family's Iowa farm that her great-grandparents reached by covered wagon in 1867.

Like most Boston filmmakers, Jordan and Ascher fund their own work in a number of ways. They secure grants (in the case of *Troublesome Creek*, from humanities councils in the Midwest), and they freelance. Ascher shoots, directs, and writes. Jordan's resumé as an editor reads like a PBS's Greatest Hits list.

When Jordan arrived in Boston in 1977, she noticed that "I was getting nowhere fast saying I was a filmmaker. I realized very quickly that I just had to say, 'I edit.' In my case, it's supported me. And I'm incredibly grateful for that. You know, you could wait tables and do your art on the side. Or you could do something that has to do with your art and do your art on the side. I have found that [editing for PBS projects] *is* my art."

Yet, Jordan says, "I'm disappointed that there are incredible filmmakers in this town and none of them have gotten their voices heard through WGBH." These sentiments are echoed over and over by Boston documentarians. Some feel not only disappointed, but also hostile toward what they consider WGBH's disregard for local independent filmmakers, except as workers-for-hire. It's a strong undercurrent in the city, and yet, no one wants to bite the hand that might feed him or her.

Robb Moss sees the problem slightly differently. "What I dislike is how the purveyors of public television, like WGBH, have greatly reduced in the public's mind what a documentary can be."

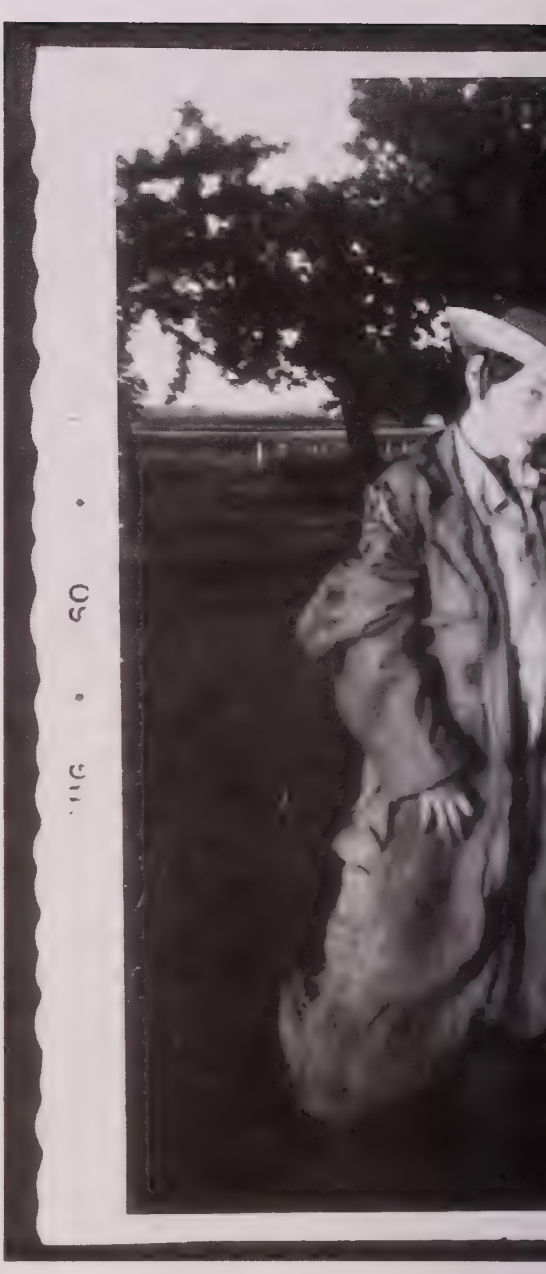
The Blackside Phenomenon

In 1987, the public's mind was expanded, at least with respect to content, when *Eyes on the Prize*, Blackside Production's landmark series about the civil rights movement, burst on the scene. "I think *Eyes* has had a major impact on the industry," says Henry Hampton, Blackside's president. "By succeeding at it, we made foundations more comfortable investing [in controversial, multicultural subjects], and we also confirmed what had been rhetoric before about our ability to reach an audience."

One of America's oldest minority-owned film companies, Blackside was founded in 1968 by Hampton, a visionary who wanted to combine his interests in history and film. A native of St. Louis, he moved to Boston after dropping out of McGill University medical school in Montreal. Prior to starting Blackside, Hampton briefly drove a cab and later worked for the Unitarian Universalist Church.

While Blackside films are generally grounded in a PBS-like structure and style, aspects of the work—particularly of the production process—set it apart: multicultural teams; a lively and intense collaborative spirit; and an immense pride in making Blackside a training ground for promising young talent, particularly aspiring Black and Latino filmmakers. Hampton still considers himself an independent filmmaker, "although we operate at a higher level most of the time than the single film or producer."

Since *Eyes I* and *II*, Blackside has produced *The Great Depression* and *Malcolm X: Make It Plain*. Currently in production are *Breakthrough*, a contemporary series about people of color in engineering and science, and *America's War on Poverty*. What unites the projects, according to Hampton, is that "we are constantly and persistently story-driven. We treat American citizens in a much broader way [than many filmmakers], not as victims, but as aggressive participants."



The quest to save the family farm in Iowa is the subject of *Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern*, by Boston filmmakers Jeanne Jordan (pictured at left) and Steven Ascher.
Courtesy filmmaker

Going It Alone

Many filmmakers in Boston follow what one might call a tradition of individualism, and prime amongst them is Frederick Wiseman. Wiseman has worked as a filmmaker in Boston since the sixties and is one of the few who makes his living almost solely that way. In 1967, his controversial first film, *Titicut Follies*, put him on the map, not to mention in the courts. The film was under a court-ordered injunction worldwide until 1991, which did not deter Wiseman from pursuing his iconoclastic vision of the world on film. He has produced close to one film a year, including *High School*, *Near Death*, *Welfare*, and *Meat*.

Like Wiseman, Errol Morris (*Gates of Heaven*, *The Thin Blue Line*) is known for his distinctive style, but Morris is a relative newcomer to Boston. His Cambridge-based company, Fourth Floor Productions, is located on the fifth floor (a detail that seems fitting, given Morris' penchant for stretching conventional notions of reality), where it churns out commercials, television pilots, and Morris' fifth non-fiction feature, tentatively titled *Fast, Cheap and Out of Control*.

Independent documentary filmmakers in Boston are remarkably prolific,



Blackside founder Henry Hampton has made his company an important training ground for promising young talent. Courtesy Blackside, Inc.

considering that the vast majority work with shoestring budgets, generous friends, a wing and a prayer and, if they're lucky, an ITVS grant. A small sampling of recent work is revealing. *Ringl and Pit*, by Argentine-born Juan Mandelbaum, explores the collaboration of emigrée photographers Ellen Auerbach and Grete Stern, women in their late eighties, who were trained at the Bauhaus. *Leona's Sister Gerri*, a documentary by Jane Gilooly, reconstructs events leading to a woman's death from an illegal abortion. Gilooly was able to finish her film in record time because of an ITVS grant. Eric Stange's *Children of the Left* grew into *Love in the Cold War*, which aired on *The American Experience* PBS series. This chilling portrait of how one American Communist family sacrificed a child to their politics was coproduced with British filmmaker David Dugan.

Who Pays the Piper?

Both Gilooly and Stange got their start with the Newton Television Foundation (NTF), a small organization that has served as fiscal agent and provider of moral and technical support for over 100 films, almost all of which are in educational distribution. "We like to see ourselves as midwives," says executive director Susi Walsh. Stange agrees: "The foundation has had an impact far beyond its size. Susi Walsh, by sheer force of will, just keeps it going."

Currently, NTF has 17 films in some stage of production. Yet the foundation's capacity to help filmmakers has been hampered by a strained economy; its yearly funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council has plummeted from $30,000 to $2,000.

"The recession really hit the industry hard here," says Mandelbaum, who arrived in Boston in 1981. "I know a lot of people who left town. Good people—technicians, producers, directors. I don't know how I would start if I were to arrive in Boston today."

Leah Mahan, who arrived on the film scene here in 1988, may be pioneering a new model for emerging independents. Along with veteran filmmaker Mark Lipman, she is producing a documentary called *Holding Ground*. The film documents the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), an inner city development project that serves as a national model for community empowerment.

Mahan and Lipman began the project as a labor of love, but as they nurtured a relationship with DSNI, funders began to understand that film has a unique capacity to communicate a message. In two years, Mahan and Lipman have obtained grants from many of the same funders as DSNI, including the Ford Foundation, while retaining full editorial control.

Core Values

Despite the variety of orbits, certain attributes characterize Boston's documentary universe and keep people going, even in hard times. In terms of content, many Boston films show a bold willingness to embrace controversial political issues, and, it seems, an odd hesitancy to address sexual ones. (Alas, the Puritan ethic dies hard!) As for the spirit of the place, there is a strong sense of sharing, whether it be friendship, equipment, advice, or perhaps most of all, a set of core values.

"I think there is an essentially Boston way of doing things," says Marlene Booth, seasoned Boston filmmaker (*The Forward*, *The Double Burden*). "I always feel that there's an academic sitting next to me saying, 'Is that really the way you want to say that? Have you really thought that through?' I don't think it makes films less good or less personal," she adds. "It has to do with imposing a certain kind of academic rigor."

Robb Moss amplifies: "Boston has a tradition of valuing independence of thought—the Thoreau thing; resistance to authority—the Tea Party thing; and a respect for intellectual content—the Academy. [In New York], there's so much economic pressure to produce that you're only as good as your next project, rather than your last project. In Boston, the model of people spending five years, 10 years writing their novel, their Ph.D thesis, and working on their films is in the air. It's part of the culture that recognizes that good work takes time and that it stands separately from its ability to generate income."

Jane Feinberg is a freelance writer and producer based in Watertown, Massachusetts. Most recently she coproduced Amelia Earhart *for PBS'* The American Experience.

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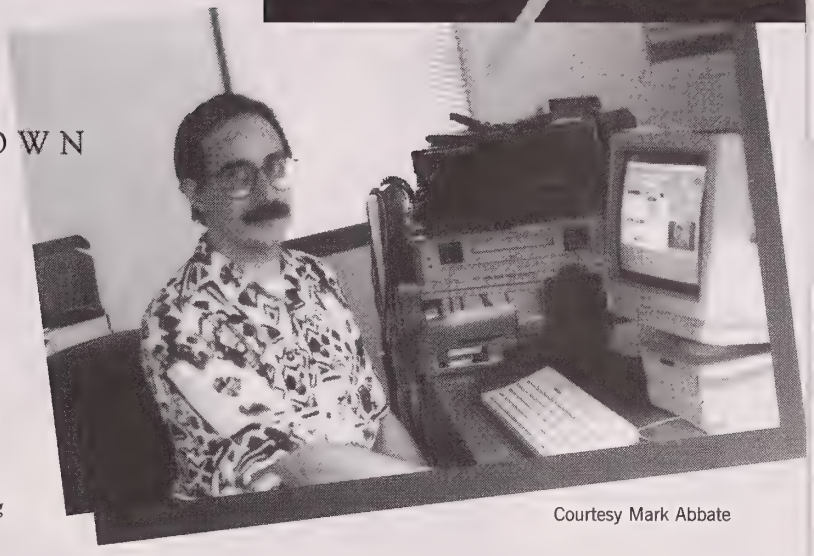
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FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

MARK ABBATE
desktop video developer

BY CYNTHIA MCKEOWN



Courtesy Mark Abbate

"I started thinking about it when I was working at a high-end post environment, says Mark Abbate, recalling how he developed his computer-based nonlinear video editing technology in the mid-eighties.

"It was obvious that the computer was going to affect video production dramatically. The part of me that enjoyed low-format production was also thinking, what can you do with your basic, garden variety computer and video equipment? Originally, I conceptualized it as a way to let producers log footage at their desks—log shot information straight into your computer and have the computer read the numbers, rather than typing them in manually. The next thought was, why don't you let the computer do the editing, spit out edit lists, and try to squeeze as much performance out of the low-end equipment as possible?"

The product Abbate created is called VideoToolkit, an inexpensive package that has won numerous awards and editorial honors, including *Desktop Video World*'s Award of Excellence in 1994, and *MacWorld* magazine's Three Star Rating in 1993.

VideoToolkit 2.0 consists of a software package and some low-end hardware and runs between $279 and $299. The simplest equipment package needed to work the VideoToolkit system includes a camcorder, a Macintosh computer (an IBM Windows version will be out soon), and any recent model VHS or 8mm deck that will perform an assemble edit.

Using VideoToolkit, video masters are logged on the Mac, and files are created for each reel of tape. Shots can be identified by marking in and out points. Both the reel of tape and the individual shots are assigned appropriate names. Then, working as on a word processor, scenes can be assembled by cutting and pasting from the shot names. To make an edit list, you simply click in logged shots from different reels. Once a sequence is decided, the Mac will direct the VCR to assemble the edit.

"I don't think it's anything radical," says Abbate, who went on to found Abbate Video in Millis, Massachusetts. "It's basically reinforcing that it's a good idea to log your material and have a permanent record. The main thing it brings to the process is the ability to do roughs or pre-selects, and it can crawl through a tape and find the 10 minutes you want. The ability to let the machine do that for you and give you something to look at can make the process go faster. I think that's of value."

Users have requested lots of additional features, and Abbate and his partners, Philip Palombo and brother Jeff Abbate, are gradually upgrading the program, most recently by adding digital video features. According to Abbate, "We'll be beefing up its ability to take an edit list from another source. Also, a number of database-related features [finding shots with more flexibility, doing A & B rolls] will be in the Windows version, and a set of user-level features will appear in the Mac version."

In 1975, when Abbate was studying engineering at MIT, he "got sucked into low format video production, back in the heyday of the high-inch open-reel black and white portapack." For a while, he straddled the fence between production and engineering, beginning his career as staff engineer for the Film Section of MIT, and continuing to do production and production engineering at BF/VF. By the mid-eighties, he was working as chief engineer at a high-end postproduction house.

"What I started to think about was the analogy between doing a small software venture and doing an independent film," Abbate says, "and how much that mentality, the Leacock mentality—which is basically if you want to do something, you go and do it—how that thinking carries over, and how the process poses a similar set of problems. Primarily, you're building something on your own because you want to use it or you want to show it. But once you've got something, how do you market it, and how do you do the next thing?

"The other interesting thing is that a lot of the people who in the late seventies were doing high-end 16mm filmmaking are now completely happy walking around with Hi8 camcorders—Leacock again being an example—and wondering why they ever did what they did with the other stuff. That's the gratifying part of creating something that touches that type of filmmaking."

Information on VideoToolkit 2.0 is available by calling: (800) 283-5553.

Cynthia McKeown is a Boston-based film- and videomaker, currently working on a documentary exploring the impact of breast cancer on women's personal lives and political activism.



Beth Harrington's films focus on Boston's Italian American community in the North End, here celebrating the Feast of the Madonna del Soccorso.
Photo: Herb Snitzer, courtesy filmmaker

Community-based media

By Christine Sandvik

Film- and videomaking in Boston has been shaped by many things. From a distance, people tend to think first and foremost of the city's colleges and universities—the Boston area is home to over 51 academic institutions (half with media programs). But no less significant is the diverse ethnicity of the city's neighborhoods. In the greater Boston area, there are people from 47 ethnicities representing 87 countries of ancestry. Not surprisingly, much of the film and video work is closely tied to these various communities.

Community-based Independents

With its long documentary tradition, Boston has been home to numerous film- and videomakers whose work is rooted in their own geographic or ethnic communities. Back in the seventies, there was Jackie Schearer, for instance, an African American videomaker and founding member of Boston Newsreel, whose *A Minor Altercation* looked at issues of racism, class, and gender in the schools. Richard Broadman is another filmmaker identified with community-based projects, who since the late seventies has dealt with the changing Boston neighborhoods and the effects of urban renewal in such works as *Mission Hill and the Miracle of Boston* and *Down Home Project*.

Today there are filmmakers like Beth Harrington carrying on the tradition. In 1977, Harrington moved to the urban North End, a predominantly Italian section of town. She grew interested in the surviving Italian American traditions, particularly the Fisherman's Feast (the feast of the Madonna del Soccorso). This ritual, which originated in Sicily, is the most dramatic and visual of all the summer feasts, and Harrington decided to capture it on video. The hardest part was convincing the two brothers in charge of the feast that making a documentary was a good idea. Although she had relatives who lived there at the turn of the century, the neighborhood is slow to embrace outsiders. But Harrington persisted, and thus began her career as documenter of North End traditions.

In 1991, she videotaped the feast a second time as a favor to neighborhood friends. When they viewed the tape, the Madonna statue appeared to blink. Despite a technical explanation, this apparition turned into a major news event, with many choosing to believe that it was a miracle. Harrington is now working on a more personal piece, *The Blinking Madonna & Other Miracles*.

Another group closely linked to its community is Blackburst Multimedia, a company formed in 1988 by Steve Tompkins and Mike King. As African Americans, the two aimed to hire racially diverse crews to work on the company's video productions. Toward this end, they formed an alliance with the group Gang Peace. For the past four summers, they have worked with this Boston-based organization teaching kids how to produce videotapes. In the course of training, the teenagers have been paid for their work and are kept off the street. Their programs have been shown at the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, among other places.

Blackburst is currently working with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, producing 14 radio and television spots in seven languages on the subject of housing discrimination.

Public Access Lives

In the early eighties, public access centers started in Somerville and Newton, and later in Cambridge and Boston proper. Their creation was the result of well negotiated deals by the cities as part of their franchise agreements with cable companies. The centers varied, but all were started with the belief that regular folks could make television programs about their own communities, and all provided studios, equipment, and training classes for that purpose.

The most effective programs have been grassroots community productions that cater to immigrant populations and niche markets. For example, the live show *Haiti Vision*, produced at Somerville Community Access Television (SCAT), eventually led to the formation of the Haitian Coalition, a community organization formed to promote political empowerment for the burgeoning Haitian community in Somerville.

The shows that have "religious, ethnic subjects, or community-based interest have been the most successful, such as the programming in Portuguese," says SCAT executive director Abigail Norman. "Where public access seems to fail is when it is used by people to express themselves or their own self-interest, which is often not that interesting to anyone else."

The most exciting new program at Cambridge Community Television

(CCTV), according to executive director Susan Fleischmann, is *BeLive*, a low tech call-in show that allows untrained community members to produce programs.

The New Media Consortium

In Boston, as elsewhere, there is an unspoken tension between public access producers and independents who try to earn a living from their craft. According to Susi Walsh, executive director of Newton Television Foundation (a hybrid organization originally funded by a cable company and now a sponsor of independent social documentaries), the value system of the public access producer differs from that of the independent. The independent usually gets payment for his or her work, and the project's quality and craftsmanship is of great importance. In contrast, public access producers are more process-oriented, volunteering their time to create community-centered programs.



From *Holding Ground*, Leah Mahan and Mark Lipman's documentary about a successful grassroots effort to revitalize Boston's poorest neighborhood.
Courtesy filmmakers

What's new is that there now are organized efforts underway to bridge this gap and create alliances between the local media arts centers and public access facilities and the producers who use them. Two years ago a group informally known as "the Consortium" was formed, including BF/VF, Cambridge Community TV, Somerville Community Access, Malden Community Access, The Space, C3TV on Cape Cod, and others. According to Anne Marie Stein, executive director of BF/VF, many of these organizations "were in competition with each other in a way that wasn't healthy."

The consortium's first project was a cable access program called *Live With*, produced at CCTV and distributed to several cable channels in the area. The 90-minute live call-in program featured the performance art group Emergency Broadcast Network, which showed videos of their work to a studio audience, followed by a Q&A with live callers.

Since then, the consortium has pooled resources to beef up its intermediate and advanced workshops for public access members in the Greater Boston area. Notice of the workshops, held at various consortium member's facilities, are sent to BF/VF's mailing list, as well as the access centers', and all interested individuals converge at a single place. "It's a good opportunity for people to meet each other," CCTVs Fleischmann notes.

As independent producers look to the future, it is clear the lack of financial and community support is of growing concern. Stein says, "Independents were once marginalized because of lack of equipment or production values; they are now marginalized because they lack access to distribution and marketing." There is a decreasing amount of independent programming on public television. And public access is also in jeopardy because of the changing regulatory environment, which could make municipal franchise agreements obsolete. A la carte cable offerings would allow viewers to pay only for channels they want, which may leave public access with an even lower viewership and less support from cable operators.

In response to these pressures, SCAT recently developed a long-range planning committee. Some of their initial plans include: political organizing to protect the franchise agreement; incorporating new technology; increasing youth training programs; and becoming a more vital community center.

As this access center recognizes, it is important for producers to stay informed about and active in governmental policy-making. It seems that now, more than ever, independent mediamakers are in need of support and are looking to their communities to find it.

Christine Sandvik is channel manager for Continental Cablevision in Cambridge, video instructor at University of Massachusetts/Lowell, and past president of Women in Film & Video/New England.

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Says Steve Gentile, creator of *The Soldier* and other animations, "It's a hard balance remaining true to creative work and actually living off of it." Courtesy filmmaker

That's Not All, Folks!

The Survival of Independent Animation in Boston

BY BRIDGET A. MURNANE

In 1978, when Karen Aqua came to Boston, fresh from the animation program at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), animator George Griffin invited her to a screening at Harvard's Carpenter Center. There she found herself at a round table with a gang of local animators, including Tim Brown, Lisa Crafts, Jim Shook, Carter Burwell, and Ken Brown. This group became the core of the thriving local animation scene, but as Aqua looks around today, she sees few familiar faces. Many have left for New York or L.A., looking for freelance work and cheaper equipment rentals.



What's for dinner, dear? RISD grad Julie Zammarchi looks at a peculiar repast in *Ape*.
Courtesy filmmaker

The seventies are often referred to as the golden years of animation in Boston. Not only was a tightly knit community of makers in place, but there were numerous venues for screening work and centers for animators to gather. Today, Aqua summarizes, "The sense of community is not as strong.... Now everyone's busy, more isolated."

The Freelance Life

Producing an independent animated film places an enormous amount of pressure on the maker. It can take years to produce a work a few minutes long, and although animation can cost far less than live-action film, balancing freelance and personal work can take its toll.

Aqua has been able to succeed in Boston through teaching and freelance work for *Sesame Street*. "When Lisa Crafts left Boston College in 1984, I started teaching there," she recalls. "This freed me up and... gave me time to do my work." In 1991, she went to New Mexico for half a year. When she returned, the class had been discontinued. "It was a blessing in disguise," she says, forcing her to seek out freelance work.

Aqua started working for *Sesame Street* in 1990 and has recently added Lifetime to her client list. In the meantime, she has continued to create projects independently, including *Perpetual Motion: A Shrine to Ritualized Time*, commissioned in 1992 for Boston's First Night, an arts celebration held every New Year's Eve; *Kakania* (1989); and a new animation based on her experiences in New Mexico.

"I worry about people making their own films," says Aqua. "I'm such a purist, I have a hard time saying commercial work is artful, but it is a way to grow and challenge yourself. It teaches you to work faster, stretch your style, and try out new things technically. But for me it's not the ultimate experience."

Aqua points to Julie Zammarchi, another RISD grad, as an example of a successful independent animator and busy freelancer. Zammarchi's Studio Z is fully equipped for shooting animation, so she does not have to travel to New York for equipment rentals.

In contrast, RISD alum Steve Gentile (*And Who Lived a Girl, The Soldier*) sometimes thinks about moving to New York. He started making films with his father's super 8 camera in his native Gloucester, then moved from painting and illustration to animation. Gentile prefers not to do commercial work, so he supports himself through teaching. "I'm dismayed at the negativity associated with the classical image of what an artist does," he says. "Most recent graduates are working for jobs on *The Simpsons* or MTV. As tuitions get higher, students will expect to receive a financial return for their investment and will have to go to centers like New York or LA.... It's a hard balance remaining true to creative work and actually living off of it."

Continued on p. 30

JANET PERLMAN & DEREK LAMB
animators

SPOTLIGHT ON BOSTON
Profile

BY KIMBERLY CAVINESS



Courtesy filmmaker

Ah, the joys of animation. No crew problems, no actors' egos, no distractions. Animators put their heads down and draw for three years, emerging from the monastic solitude with a perfect, witty jewel. Right? Not always.

At this moment, Derek Lamb might be in Toronto, Rio, or Manila, overseeing some 25 animators on a film about as messy a subject as glue-sniffing. Look for Janet Perlman in Montreal, London, or Toronto, working on her new series on conflict resolution. To reach this husband-wife team, each an internationally acclaimed, award-winning animator, try their answering machine in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where they live—sometimes.

"We're pretty jet-set for animators," admits Perlman, who is most widely recognized for the Edward Gorey-based titles she and Lamb created for *Mystery!*

Why would Lamb, a Brit who served as executive director of the National Film Board of Canada's Animation Studio for six years, and Perlman, a Montreal native, make their home in Boston, a city not famous for funding filmmakers? "We came down here to teach, and I found that I loved it here," Perlman says. "Support can come from different sources, and in the case of the United States, the universities are very exciting places to be."

Their academic relationship with Harvard University began in 1965, when Lamb, then a young animator in his twenties, was invited to help establish an animation department at the Carpenter Center for Visual Arts. Lamb's career later took him to PBS in New York and the National Film Board in Montreal, where he met Perlman. In 1986, Harvard called again and he returned, this time with Perlman. The two have established themselves as animators and teachers at the center of the school and Boston's film culture.

"We're all independents. Many of us are here because we love Boston. Of course, there is not a large commercial industry here," says Lamb; "but most people find a way of surviving outside, in the main commercial industry—in New York or Los Angeles."

To pay the bills they did "a lot of *Sesame Streets*, corporate work, WGBH," says Perlman. In addition to teaching, "I seem to always have two projects going on at once. One of them is to earn a living, and one of them is the one I really want to do." She is currently finishing *My Most Favorite Things That I Love*, which she shot at Harvard between classes. A delightful four minutes chock-full of pinks, princesses, and all things feminine, this "celebration of cultural icons from her childhood" showcases Perlman's wit and whimsy.

"There's a Janet Perlman way of approaching a subject," explains Lamb, "so that her books and her films and her television commercials have a very distinctive flavor, which I find absolutely irresistibly charming. In both of our work—and I suppose what attracts us to each other— humor plays a big part."

Humor is a serious subject in this household. Theirs is a brand of comedy that doesn't ignore the ugly, the difficult, the tragic. Their first collaboration, *Why Me?*, catalogues the reactions of an Everyman informed by his doctor that he has five minutes to live. The man denies, despairs, and destroys—in a comic rampage—the doctor's office. Finally, he accepts death. Heavy stuff for animation. "That was quite a shock for people when we made that in the late seventies," says Lamb.

They are equally serious about work. As Lamb notes, "It's central to both our lives." Most nights, Perlman works with her Amiga "till at least two in the morning." Scanning her hand-drawings digitally into the computer "lets me take lots of risks and try lots of ways of doing something. It has improved my animation tremendously."

The day after this interview, Lamb will fly to Toronto to finish *Goldtooth*, an anti-drug film for street kids that will be released in "150 countries and 25 languages." He explains, "I am primarily a story writer, though I do draw a lot and animate. Once I know my audience, I will say, 'What is the best way to approach this, and who is the best team of people?'

"Janet and I may show our films together," says Lamb on this summer night, anticipating an October screening of *Goldtooth* at Brookline's Coolidge Corner Theatre. Perlman makes a face. "The only thing is that Derek's film is on a very serious subject and *My Favorite Things That I Love* is a ridiculous piece of fluff. It's pathetically frivolous. I tried to make it as frivolous as possible." Lamb smiles. Perlman smiles. Humor and gravity meet again in the Lamb-Perlman household.

Several sources distribute Perlman's and Lamb's films. For details, contact them at: 20 Gray St., Cambridge, MA 02138; (617) 868-3655 (tel. & fax).

Writer and filmmaker Kimberly Caviness' narrative movie, Vanessa, the Orange Thrower, *is in the last stages of postproduction. She is the editor of* American Movie Classics.

Those Who Can Teach

Many other animators also take advantage of flexible teaching schedules as a way to produce their own work and make a living. Emerson College, Harvard University, the Museum School, the Art Institute of Boston, Simmons College, Massachusetts College of Art, and Rhode Island School of Design all currently run animation classes.

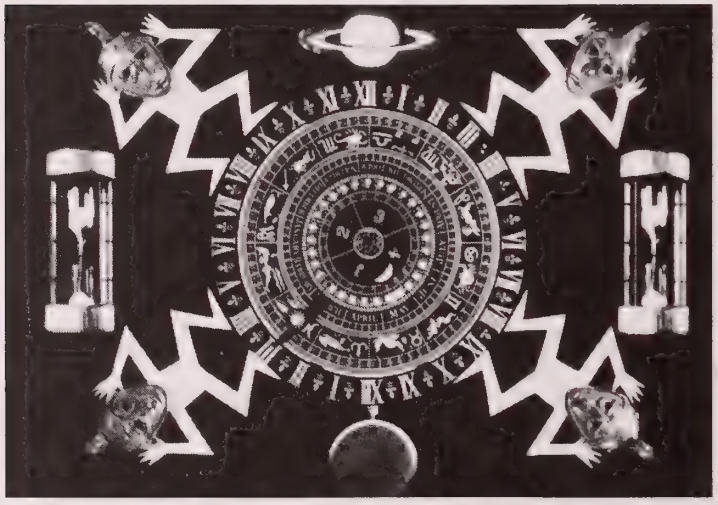
RISD, which runs the best known program, has produced graduates who have worked on such major animation projects as *The Simpsons*, *Tim Burton's Nightmare Before Christmas*, and MTV. Yvonne Anderson chaired the RISD program for nine years. When she started, the program had 18 students; it now has 100. Anderson is also founder of the Yellow Ball workshop, a children's animation program started in 1963. Some of these students advanced to RISD, including the current chair of the department, Amy Kravitz.

Since stepping down as department chair, Anderson has had more time to devote to her own work. She has just completed *We Will Live Forever*, a five-minute film based on the poems of her husband, Domenic Falcone. Her work-in-progress, combining puppet animation with airbrushed backgrounds, is tentatively titled *National Emblem*. "Working on one's own projects is so labor intensive and time consuming," she notes. "When I was running the department, I was unable to do this."

Despite the benefits of teaching, it can produce burn-out. Flip Johnson taught animation at the Museum School for 12 years, but for the past two has turned to freelance. "The older you get, the harder it is to survive. I can make a living... but I wish there was some way for people to afford to make art."

Down to Business

Johnson is currently directing commercials at Olive Jar, the largest animation studio in Boston. Olive Jar was founded 1984 by Emerson grads Mark D'Oliveira (Olive) and Bill Jarcho (Jar) as a way to meet the increasing demand for commercial clay animation. Within two years, they had established a national reputation for wildly creative work and soon expanded their techniques to include all areas of 2-D and 3-D animation. Olive Jar now employs a wide range of local animators and displays an impressive client list, including MTV, HBO, Nickelodeon, Showtime, ABC, CBS, Lifetime, VH-1, and many more



From *Perpetual Motion*, by Karen Aqua, whose life has been in perpetual motion since she came to Boston from the animation program at RISD.
Courtesy filmmake

D'Oliveira and Jarcho left the firm to pursue other interests a few years ago, and the company was sold to Lawrence Pensack and Frederic Macdonald. Animators in Boston see Olive Jar as being more business oriented these days. Tibor Szakaly (*Bad Day at Bob's Bank, Fur Ever More*), an animator who teaches at Emerson College, comments, "The animation community centered around Olive Jar [in the eighties]. Most people who worked there knew each other. There were plenty of places to see animation. [Now] more independents are doing their own films. But I don't see a future for myself in Boston. It's just not economically feasible."

Animation On-Line

Because of the concentration of universities, especially MIT, computer animation is big on everyone's agenda in Boston, as it is elsewhere. The Boston Computer Society and the Toaster Users Group meet and screen work. Commercial studios and academic institutions are struggling to keep up with current technology. According to Anderson at RISD (which has added equipment and requirements in computer animation), "The big problem is how to make it better for not much money. Everyone will eventually need computer animation experience."

One of the best kept secrets in town is the Museum School's computer room, run by Matt Harder. The Museum School is switching from Amiga to Macintosh, which will be networked to nonlinear edit systems. Students will be able to produce broadcast quality work in a very accessible way. "[Students] put together short stories with characters and build objects and add sound," explains Harder, who himself is designing an interactive art museum on CD-ROM. "It's all kept to a pretty rudimentary level. People are creating images in PhotoShop, and with a pressure sensitive pen can use their skills as painters and illustrators... An explosion is going to happen when Mac solves the problem of working in real time."

Where the Screens Are

More good news for the animation community is that screening venues are beginning to open up. Animation has recently been screened at the Off the Wall series at the Middle East Club on Sunday evenings, plus the Museum of Fine Arts, the Somerville, Brattle, and Coolidge Corner Theaters, and the yearly Animation New England Film and Video Festival.

At the Coolidge, Lisa Faircloth has been working with David Kleiler, the theater's director, to program Local Citings, a series of films by local independents. The series will devote entire nights to animation beginning this fall. Faircloth hopes to influence future local animators by screening a wide range of styles and formats and following screenings with question-and-answer sessions with filmmakers.

What the Future Holds

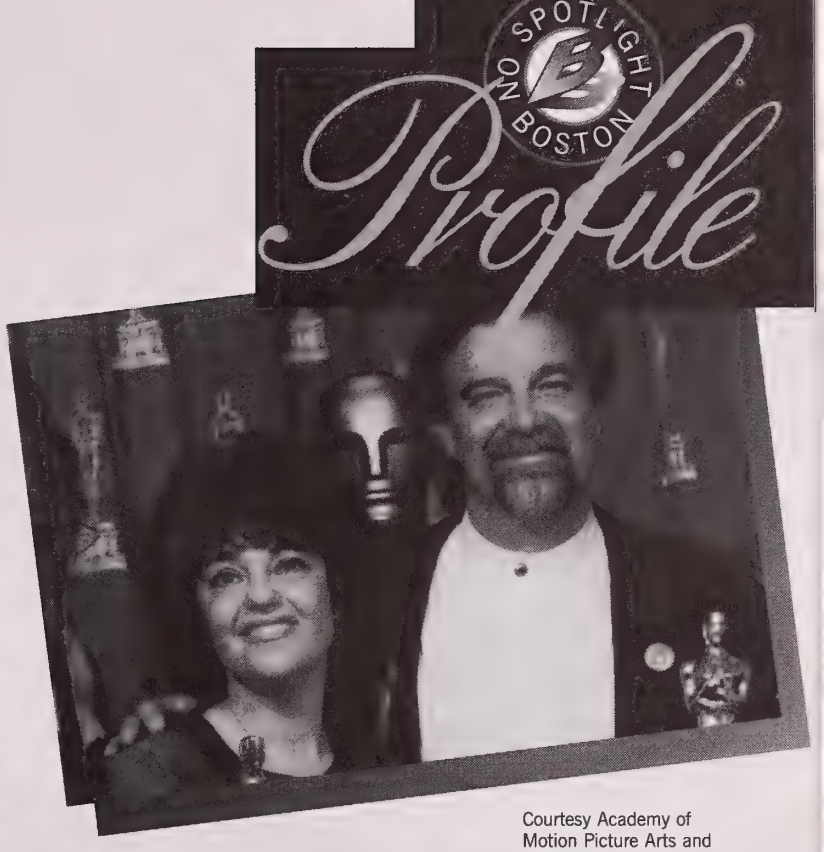
With recent developments in communication technologies, live-action and animation no longer exist in separate vacuums, and it is no longer imperative that an animator live in New York or Los Angeles to make a living. (One animator working on *The Simpsons* returned to Boston after the recent earthquake and continues to work for the show via computer.) The economic realities of the region are well known, but in many ways, animators have more employment opportunities here than in other major cities outside of New York or Los Angeles, whether it be at commercial houses or in schools.

This fall, Tom Krepcio will be teaching the History of Animation at the Art Institute of Boston, helping to validate the genre in academic circles. But it's the survival of today's independent animation that troubles most local makers, who are keeping close tabs on the city's screenings, grants, residencies, and economic support to find out whether the golden age of animation in Boston has disappeared forever.

Bridget Murnane is an independent producer/director and assistant professor at Emerson College.

MARGARET LAZARUS & RENNER WUNDERLICH
documentarians
DEFENDING OUR LIVES

BY JULIE LEVINSON



Courtesy Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

A few years ago, there was an effort by some members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to do away with the awards for documentaries and short subjects. To many voters and viewers of the annual Oscar hoopla, the unknown independents who stand up to claim their awards seem to have arrived out of the blue from some obscure filmic universe. But Margaret Lazarus and Renner Wunderlich, winners of this year's Oscar for Best Short Documentary for *Defending Our Lives*, are hardly overnight sensations. Their Oscar is the upshot of a 20-year career on the front lines of social issue documentary production and media activism.

Lazarus and Wunderlich cut their teeth in commercial television but both quit their jobs to form Cambridge Documentary Films in 1974. As Lazarus tells it, "We just felt constrained, and there was too much we wanted to say that television wouldn't let us say. So we formed a nonprofit organization and have been cranking it out ever since." Among the titles they have coproduced and directed over the past two decades are *Taking Our Bodies Back*, *Rape Culture*, *Killing Us Softly*, *Pink Triangles*, and *The Last Empire*.

Their company not only produces films but distributes them as well, and their catalogue includes a few other documentaries alongside their own. Each film is sent out accompanied by a study guide full of suggestions on facilitating post-film discussions and containing lists of related resources. Although self-distribution takes time and energy away from production, Lazarus and Wunderlich feel committed to it. "Viewing our films should not be a passive experience," Lazarus explains. "They are intended to start a dialogue, and we are deeply involved in distribution because that is how you hear about responses and stay connected."

Defending Our Lives, their Oscar-winning film about domestic violence, has begun a dialogue on a broad scale. This searing portrait of four women imprisoned for killing their batterers has been screened for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives as well as for numerous state legislatures, and it has become a key organizing tool in the campaign for judicial reform.

The film's design is intentionally spare, consisting mostly of testimonies from its subjects, with occasional cutaways to news footage or a conference on domestic abuse. Their characteristic "minimalist film style," as Wunderlich describes it, was on earlier films necessitated by budgetary constraints. But for *Defending Our Lives*, the filmmakers shot a great deal of material and then laboriously winnowed it down in the editing room. The effect of their forthright presentation is a clarion call against domestic violence and the legal system that is in collusion against the victims.

In response to the inevitable question about how the imprimatur of the Oscar will affect their career, Wunderlich is skeptical. "Although there is no predicting the long-range effect, so far it hasn't helped our fundraising. In fact, it may even backfire. We've already received a couple of letters rejecting us: 'Now that you've won the Academy Award, we're sure you won't have any trouble raising money.'"

The filmmakers' appearance at the Oscar ceremony was, however, a boon for distribution. The day after the awards, the Academy was flooded with requests for information on how to get the film. Several battered women's shelters found their way to Cambridge Documentary Resources on account of the exposure the film received.

Unfortunately, the Oscar broadcast may be the film's only presence on national television. Although it has been aired on individual public stations, PBS rejected it. They defended their decision by claiming—incorrectly—that coproducer Stacy Kabat, founder of Battered Women Fighting Back, had a "direct self-interest" in the film. When asked to elaborate on their refusal to run *Defending Our Lives*, programming staff stated that they accept only films produced by "bona fide journalistic entities." Lazarus and Wunderlich suspect that this elusive excuse is a dodge for PBS' timorousness in dealing with freighted subjects. Their cause has been taken up by the Los-Angeles based Coalition versus PBS Censorship, an advocacy group mounting a campaign on behalf of several stifled films.

Still, *Defending Our Lives* is making its mark. Three of the four women profiled have had their prison sentences commuted and have organized as advocates. The film is widely used in educational and lobbying efforts. Despite their ongoing funding and distribution challenges, Lazarus and Wunderlich remain undaunted in their commitment to making fiercely independent films. Wunderlich sums up their credo: "People are obsessed when they make these things. They think about the long-term prospects constantly, but that doesn't stop them; the people who succeed in finishing a film just have to do it. If it's your passion, you find ways."

Lazarus & Wunderlich's films are available from Cambridge Documentary Films,

A Fest of One's Own

The Boston International Festival of Women's Cinema

BY PATRICIA THOMSON



Women's film festivals offer the opportunity not only to see new work, but to catch overlooked, undistributed gems like Nietzchka Keene's *The Juniper Tree*, which blends a Brothers Grimm story with Icelandic medieval folk magic.
Courtesy filmmaker

IN MY GYM IN NEW YORK CITY, MOST OF THE DAYTIME CHATTER IS ABOUT THEATER AUDITIONS AND NEW TATTOOS. IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, I FOUND QUITE A DIFFERENT SCENE.

It was a few days after President Nixon had been buried with full honors and only hushed references to his disgrace in office. "Say, do you remember when you contributed to my political campaign?," asked a sprightly, grey-haired lady to her elderly gentleman friend on the lats machine. Both looked like they'd be right at home in a tweedy faculty club or Harvard's JFK School of Government, just across the street. "Then, a week later, you appeared on Nixon's enemies list?" she continued with a feisty snort. "And I remember thinking, this has got to be the only place where being on that list would be a political advantage!"

Yes, I thought, Cambridge is a special kind of place, with its ubiquitous bookstores displaying arcane titles, its cafés where intellects parry, and its history of liberal politics. At its center is the century-old Brattle Theater. In 1953, Cyrus Harvey, Jr. and Byrant Haliday turned this historic social club and theater into the country's first repertory cinema, reviving "old-fashioned" Hollywood classics and introducing American audiences to Ingmar Bergman and François Truffaut.

Today the Brattle is in the hands of Connie White and Marianne Lampke, who rescued it from bankruptcy in 1986 and have revitalized its reputation for innovative programming. Two years ago, they decided to incorporate a full-fledged film festival into the Brattle's calendar. This venture, coorganized by the Boston Film/Video Foundation, is the Boston International Festival of Women's Cinema, held for its second year last April 25 to May 2.

The decision to mount a women's film festival didn't come easily. Two among the handful of women who manage commercial art houses, Lampke and White were reluctant to segregate works by women, preferring to devise ways to incorporate a feminist perspective into their daily programming. The result has been a refreshingly inventive repertory calendar. Not many commercial theaters would have programmed a series called "Witch Hunts: 300 Years of Women on Trial" right on the heels of the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings, for instance (which happened to coincide with the 300th anniversary of the Salem witch trials).

Eventually Lampke and White decided a women's film festival was worth doing. "The bottom line is that women's films get hidden," Lampke explained. Once the decision was made, the two aimed high, striving for a "world-class women's film festival." This year they achieved an international line-up, bringing in films from China, Italy, France, South Africa, Germany, Argentina, the UK, Australia, and elsewhere, including work by Doris Dorrie, Jane Campion, Kate Bush, Sally Potter, and Lina Wertmüller. Of these, the highlight was *Looking for Fun*, a story of cantankerous retirees setting up an amateur Peking Opera club, by the talented but unsung Fifth Generation director Ning Ying, and the low point plumbed by Wertmüller's cliché-ridden *Me I Hope I Make It*, retitled *Ciao, Professore* for its commercial U.S. release.

But the bulk of the festival's 40 films were home-grown, a mix of dramatic features, shorts, and documentaries. A number of films currently on the festival or theatrical circuit made their Boston debut here, including Shu Lea Cheang's *Fresh Kill*, Gini Reticker and Amber Hollibaugh's *Heart of the Matter*,

Continued on p. 34

SPOTLIGHT ON BOSTON

Profile

SALEM MEKURIA
documentarian
SILENCE IS NOT GOLDEN

BY CATE MCQUAID



Courtesy filmmaker

Salem Mekuria has just flown home to Boston, having completed filming of her current project in Ethiopia, land of her birth. The film, with the working title *Silence Is Not Golden*, is a tapestry of oral histories, still photographs, letters, and news reports. It documents the military dictatorship that ruled Ethiopia for 17 years, from 1974, when it seized power from Emperor Haile Selassie, to 1991, when ruler Mengitsu Haile Mariam was overthrown and exiled to Zimbabwe.

"So much happened," Mekuria laments. "It's a struggle to try to condense it without losing the complexity. That's why I chose the personal approach."

Mekuria left her family in Ethiopia in 1973 to come to school in the United States. She frames the narrative with letters from her younger brother, a member of the students' revolutionary movement, who wrote to her over the years. He disappeared in 1978, probably murdered for his politics.

Telling her own story, Mekuria says, "freed me from worrying. Facts are so easily manipulated. We are a contentious people. What authority do I have to take an important part of history and tell it from a distance [as a long-time U.S. resident]? Including myself in it, it's really my story."

Silence follows on the heels of *Sideth: Forced Exile*, a documentary about Ethiopian refugee women living in Sudan. Mekuria's other films are *Dorothy West*, an hour-long documentary about the Massachusetts writer who was part of the Harlem Renaissance, and *Our Place in the Sun*, a 30-minute documentary about the African American population of Nantucket. Both films aired locally on WGBH.

It was *Sideth*, though, that paved the way artistically and logistically for *Silence*. "It was a tough thing to push, as an African woman," she recalls. "I started out at the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees] office in Geneva, and nobody wanted to talk to me. 'This African woman thinks she's going to do something,' was the attitude.

"The tide changed when Channel 4 in London said they would give me funding. UNHCR saw I was credible. Fundraising was a tough process, frustrating, but once I got Channel 4, then German television and the MacArthur Foundation came through with production funding, and UniFam funding from the UNDP [United Nations Development Program]. [*Sideth*] was a fully funded film, which is completely unusual."

Despite the money, filming in Sudan was fraught with difficulties. "There was a serious breakdown in communication between the central office and people out in the field. We were taken to the police station a lot, and we'd lose half a day. And being a woman was difficult, although I had two very tall white men with me."

Unlike *Dorothy West*, *Sideth* hasn't been picked up by public television stations in the U.S. It is being distributed by Women Make Movies to colleges, conferences, and women's organizations. "There's not much money in it," Mekuria remarks. "But at least it's being seen."

She is currently peddling *Silence* to Channel 4 and other European markets, as well as to PBS' *P.O.V.*, looking for finishing funds. "I want to push for distribution for Ethiopians, both in Ethiopia and in this country," Mekuria says. "There are hundreds of thousands of people here who will benefit from seeing what happened."

As a girl, Mekuria never dreamed of being a filmmaker; it was too far away from her own experience. "I wanted to be an architect," she says with a smile. "So I'm designing films instead of buildings."

She came to the U.S. to study print journalism, but ended up getting a masters in educational technology at San Francisco State University. From there, she moved to Boston to work at WGBH, first as a secretary for *Say Brother*, a minority affairs show, then as a PA and later a producer with *Nova*. Now, in addition to filmmaking, she teaches film and video at Wellesley College.

Silence has at least another year of work before it is completed, but Mekuria is thinking ahead to her next project, on the volatile issue of female genital mutilation. "It's a difficult thing to summarize. The work that Alice Walker and Pratibha Parmar have done [*Warrior Marks*] is out of context. It denies the voice of African women who have been working on this issue. That's a typical Western way of doing something," she says. "I don't oppose eradication [of the practice of genital mutilation]. I am opposing the strident attitude embodied by [*Warrior Marks*]. You don't just wave your magic wand and change a cultural practice that has been going on for centuries."

Mekuria considers herself lucky. "I have the skill and the privilege, and not that many Ethiopians, let alone Ethiopian women, are in this privileged position. I learn as I make films. I reconnect with my history and my culture and my people. Filmmaking is taking a course in whatever you're doing your film about. What better way is there for me to learn?"

Dorothy West and *Sideth: Forced Exile* are distributed by Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606.

Cate McQuaid is a freelance writer in Boston. She writes for The Phoenix *and reports on the arts for WBUR-FM.*

Lucy Phenix's *Cancer in Two Voices*, Andre Burke's *Odile & Yvette at the Edge of the World* (produced by Bostonian Bridget Murnane), and Allie Light's *Dialogues with Madwomen*, which had a theatrical run at the Brattle shortly after the festival, as did Alice Walker and Pratibha Parmar's *Warrior Marks*. The festival also gave considerable space to shorts, with two well-attended evenings of lesbian films, a selection of Jane Campion's early shorts, and a program of New England work. Such programs gave a welcome spotlight to such gems as Julie Zammarchi's sardonic animation *Ape*, Greta Schiller's stylish Victorian tale *Woman of the Wolf*, and Su Friedrich's funny and poignant rumination on love lost, *Rules of the Road*.

"The organizers did a good job of showing the diversity of women," said Boston director Alice Stone at a reception hosted by Women in Film & Video/New England prior to the New England showcase. "This isn't a 'women's issues' film festival; the works are as diverse as at any festival."

From the organizers' perspective, "The ideal is to have a festival where audiences and filmmakers interact, where you can see your audience and see other filmmakers," explains White, before jumping up to confort her squalling infant son. ("Another thing about organizing women's film festivals is there's lots of kids around," she laughingly adds.)



Elaine Proctor's *Friends*, from South Africa, is among a strong set of foreign features included in the second edition of Boston's women's film festival. Courtesy Brattle Theater

A number of evenings realized this ideal. Stone's film on five motorcyclists, *She Lives to Ride*, attracted one of the festival's more exuberant crowds. A dozen members of Boston's Moving Violations biker club attended the screening, cheering loudly whenever their idols appeared. The leather-clad women had made a showy entrance as well, arriving in a cavalcade of Harleys with the director in tow.

Another intense audience-filmmaker communion occured with Nietzchka Keene's black-and-white feature *The Juniper Tree*. Set in Iceland and mixing medieval folk magic with Brothers Grimm, this spare and moody film tells the story of two sisters trying survive after their mother is burned as a witch. Seated on the Brattle's stage before a riveted audience, Keene fielded questions about religion and sexuality, Icelandic poetry, witch burnings, and her diminutive production budget for well over a half-hour after the screening. When we were finally chased out of the theater for the night, Keene was followed by swarm of 25 audience members requesting video cassettes.

Keene's former classmate at UCLA, Allison Anders, was also on the scene with *Mi Vida Loca*. Having just had the wind knocked from her sails when Hugh Grant, her lead actor in *Paul Is Dead*, dropped out a week before production was to commence, Anders welcomed the festival's infusion of energy and her film's full house. Among her well-wishers were two young women, their faces lit with admiration. "I wrote a paper about *Gas, Food, Lodging* for my film class," confessed the student with a long braid and knapsack. "Oh, you've got to send it to me," Anders gushed.

The next morning, the director admitted, "That was absolutely what I needed." Because of the *Paul Is Dead* fiasco, "I had been inspired to get a waitressing job. There, at least, you get paid—and get laid." Anders' laugh is big and contagious. "But talking to those film students, I was thinking how I had no female role models when I was young," she continued. "I remember writing papers about Wim Wenders. Now I'm pleased they're writing about me."

Such moments of connection are exactly what a women's film festival is all about. But this festival also had its missed opportunities, reflected in the poor turnout for numerous films that might have attracted much larger audiences with some outreach. Barely three dozen showed up for Ayoka Chenzira's long-awaited first feature, *Alma's Rainbow*, including only about six African Americans in a city with a significant Black population. Likewise, such health-related films as *Heart of the Matter*, a documentary on AIDS and women's sexuality which drew sell-out crowds at the Sundance and Berlin film festivals, here attracted only about 15 people—a desolate showing in this 250-seat space. (The silver lining was that Reticker's advance work brought in a couple of academics who teach courses on women and health, who are "definitely going to buy the film," according to the filmmaker.)

It's not that the organizers don't know what to do. They actively courted local grassroots women's groups during the festival's first year, singling out the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, the magazine *Sojourner*, and a battered women's shelter to receive a cut of the festival's profits. This ultimately proved a symbolic gesture, since the festival lost about $2,000, according to Lampke. (This year it broke even.) Furthermore, the women's groups were given too little time to plan benefit parties and publicity, the organizers now admit.

This year they relied on volunteers at BF/VF, which was in charge of the festival's public relations, to research and launch targeted marketing campaigns. A press release was drawn up for the three health-related films, but "they missed the deadlines," says White. To do it right, she concludes, "We would need separate people for audience development, a benefit committee, and trafficking films. It all comes down to staff." The fact that two of the three organizers were pregnant this year didn't help.

Nonetheless, Lampke, White, and Stein have big ambitions for future editions of the festival. They have been savvy about making connections with local businesses, including the classy Charles Hotel, the local alternative weekly the *Boston Phoenix*, and Champagne Veuve Clicquot, the only French champagne company run by a woman. They're talking about including video within the next year or two and hope to increase the opportunities for interaction between local and visiting filmmakers and audiences. A $6,500 grant for educational programs, including workshops with the visiting directors, is pending at the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

It's a worthy effort, helping women connect with professional peers and mentors. I was reminded just how critical this is when speaking to a dozen adolescent girls at Take Our Daughters to Work day at the Charles Hotel, which happened to coincide with the festival. As we lunched on pizzas prepared by the girls (inventively topped with pineapples and Oreo cookies), I told them how a TV executive had vetoed the idea of turning the best-selling *Babysitters Club* books into a television series because, in his view, "Girls just don't have very interesting lives growing up." The young women in the room vociferously disagreed (as did HBO, which aired the series). Fired up by the challenge, they rattled off a barrage of TV ideas. One 11-year-old had already gotten the chance to put hers on video through a media education program in her school. "But I think they're not going to continue the class next year," she said softly. So young to get a taste of such production obstacles, I thought. But clearly she was hooked. As I encouraged her to seek out other media training programs, I hoped that she would also be able to find some female role models—but not have to look quite so hard as Allison Anders or even her young fans.

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.

Boston-Area Festivals

Asian American International Film & Video Festival

Held in March, deadline November

Fifth year for Boston edition of fest, cosponsored by Asian American Resource Center & Museum of Fine Arts. One-third of programming comes from Asian CineVision's traveling int'l film fest, two-thirds curated by Boston programmers.

Contact: Bo Smith at MFA, (617) 267-4300

Boston Film Festival

Held in September; deadline in July

Noncompetitive fest, now in 10th year, shows mix of films by majors, mini-majors, shorts & indie work. Loews Theatres is sponsor, with fest shown at Loews Copley Place.

Contact: Mark Diamond, (617) 471-1778

Boston International Festival of Women's Cinema

Held in April; deadline in March

See accompanying story.

Contact: Marianne Lampke & Connie White, (617) 876-6708.

Boston Jewish Film Festival

Held in November; deadline in July

Established in 1988, noncompetitive fest showcases fiction and doc films from around globe that explore themes and issues relevant to Jews today. Boston's best attended Jewish cultural event.

Contact: Dale Rosen, director (617) 367-6812.

Gay and Lesbian Film & Video Festival

Held in June; deadline in March

Celebrating 10th anniversary in 1994, noncompetitive fest offers 30 programs of films & videos in all genres. Past editions held at the Museum of Fine Arts and Harvard Film Archive.

Contact: Jim Singletary at MFA, (617) 267-4300 x 454, or George Mansour, (617) 266-9129.

New England Children's Video and Film Festival

Held in November; deadline in June

Fest is multicultural event showcasing diverse selction of outstanding films & videos for kids of all ages produced by filmmakers from around world. Competitive event incl. features, shorts, animation, docs & experimental. Held at variety of locations in greater Boston area, including museums, libraries, and public theaters.

Contact: Cheryl Hirschman, exec. dir. Center for Children's Media; (617) 391-4260.

New England Film & Video Festival

Held in May; deadline in January

Competitive fest celebrating 20th anniv. in 1995 features work by independents residing in New England (ME, VT, NH, MA, CT, RI) and college students attending New England schools or from New England. Held in Boston at Museum of Fine Arts & Tsai Performance Center.

Contact: Pam Korza, festival director, Arts Extension Service, Univ. of MA, Amherst; (413) 545-2360.

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Read My Lips

Striving for a Media Literate Massachusetts

BY TIM WRIGHT

The United States spends billions of dollars teaching Americans to read sentences like this. But who teaches us to read the flow of sounds and images that wash over us ceaselessly in our commercially-driven, media-saturated environment? A small but growing number of activists, educators, foundations, and even corporations are beginning to address the issue of "media literacy," typically defined as the ability to "access, analyze, evaluate, and produce media in a variety of forms."

Boston has become one of the hot spots for media literacy. According to Cherie Martin, who recently conducted a survey on the matter for the Boston Film/Video Foundation, there are currently some 850 organizations and individuals doing media literacy work in Massachusetts. The following is a sampling of some of the diverse programs in the Boston area.

One of the newest is the **Youth Voice Collaborative**. Led by the Boston YWCA, the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, the Roxbury Boys' and Girls' Club, and the Boston Girl Scout Council, this group recently completed a year-long planning process funded by the Boston Foundation through its Persistent Poverty Project. The planning effort, directed by Martella Wilson-Taylor of the YWCA, calls for "inner city youth empowerment projects which combine media literacy, video production, mentoring, and explorations of new media technologies for groups of young people 13-16 years old." The project is currently seeking funding for a pilot to commence this fall.



Food for thought from the Buffalo Gal's South End billboard in Boston.
Courtesy mediamakers

The **Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities** (MFH) has recently launched Changing Channels, which it describes as "a multi-year initiative designed to increase public understanding of the profound influence of the mass media, particularly television, on our culture." In addition to funding scholars to write and speak on media influence, MFH, together with the Massachusetts Cultural Council, funded three teacher training institutes in media literacy this past summer—in Boston, Worcester, and Amherst. MFH has also designed a series of media literacy workshops for nonprofit organizations serving urban youth, in collaboration with Jamaica Plain Newsreel.

Separate from the MFH teacher training institutes is the week-long **Institute on Media Education**, which took place this past August for the second year at the Harvard Education School. Directed by Renee Hobbs, a media education professor at Babson College in Wellesley, the conference brings together teachers, administrators, and scholars to promote the teaching of media literacy in schools.

Community television facilities are beginning to move on issues of media literacy, according to Susan Fleischmann, executive director of Cambridge Community Television. CCTV includes media literacy exercises in its orientations and workshops, and, with funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, has piloted a media literacy lab for fifth and sixth graders in the Cambridge public schools. Media literacy workshops for local public access trainers have also been held at Malden Access Television.

The **Boston Children's Museum** features an exhibit for children age seven and up called "TV and Me." Interactive displays deal with the effects of advertising on children, how sounds influence images, and television violence. According to the exhibit's co-designer, Joanne Rizzi, "We're not saying TV is bad. We're not saying it's good. We're saying it's here, and its watchers need to develop critical viewing skills." The exhibit is scheduled to run indefinitely.

Interestingly, the media literacy movement has begun to attract for-profit players as well as nonprofits. These include **Continental Cablevision**, the third largest cable television corporation in the U.S. and manager of cable systems in Cambridge and in numerous Boston suburbs. Continental recently shipped two videos dealing with media literacy to more than 3,000 local teachers. One is hosted and produced by Renee Hobbs.

Finally, as a reminder that media literacy work can happen without conferences, curricula, or even videotapes, consider the **Buffalo Gals**. These Boston artists describe themselves as "concerned, if not obsessed, with corporate mechanisms of social control, especially propaganda." They have spent much of the past year subverting the Boston subway's Commuter Channel, a system of video monitors on subway waiting platforms which subject commuters to a mix of information and advertising. The Buffalo Gals distribute fact sheets and post ironic stickers on trains, in stations, and on monitors critiquing the mass media messages. Their tactics also include the filing of a lawsuit alleging "unconstitutional invasion of mental autonomy under First Amendment 'captive audience' doctrine."

All these organizations are among those taking part in the **Massachusetts Media Literacy Coalition**, which came out of a meeting of media literacy activists at the Children's Museum in January. The coalition's mission is "to promote...a media literate citizenry in Massachusetts." It has discussed hold-

ing public forums on subjects such as commercial media in the schools and developing a media literacy resource and training center.

Whether the coalition can incorporate so diverse a membership and lobby effectively remains to be seen. The Continental initiative, for instance, has been received uneasily. Some members are wondering what it means "when a corporation like Continental takes up an issue which has historically developed as a critical response...to corporate culture itself," according to Norman Cowie, director of the Five College Summer Institute in Media Literacy, held in Amherst, Massachusetts. Others feel the dangers of being co-opted are outweighed by the prospect of wider outreach.

Part of the problem lies in the phrase "media literacy." The term has an apolitical ring that appeals to those wishing to reach the largest possible audience without offense. Who, after all, could be against "literacy"? But media literacy entails critical analysis—examining who is creating the message, for what end, and to what effect. Examining the paradox of how giant, privately owned media conglomerates can assume the task of fairly representing the public interest in their news programming, for instance, is bound to offend, even as it enlightens. Stay tuned for how this plays out in Boston.

Tim Wright is an independent documentary producer and teacher in Boston.

Who to Call

Youth Voice Collaborative: Ruth Irving Parham, Boston YWCA, (617) 351-7635.

Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities: Gail Reimer, associate director, (617) 451-9021.

Institute on Media Education: Renee Hobbs, (617) 239-4975.

Public Access TV: Cambridge Community Television: Edwin Ortiz, CCTV, (617) 225-2500. Malden Access TV: Rika Welch, (617) 321-6400.

Boston Children's Museum: Joanne Rizzi, (617) 426-6500, ext. 263.

Continental Cablevision: Nancy Larkin, Continental vice president for community relations, (617) 742-9500.

Buffalo Gals: Lydia Eccles, Wendy Hamer, (617) 868-9475.

Massachusetts Media Literacy Coalition: Susi Walsh, (617) 965-8477.

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By Mitch Albert

It's the little things that count, and Gary Roma is obsessed with them. In **Off the Ground & Off the Wall: A Doorstop Documentary** (22 min., VHS), Roma takes the time to demystify the utterly banal. He asserts, "If you take a hard look at the mundane, funny things happen." What's more, prepare to have your "lives change in some small way—[You] will never look, or not look, at doorstops in quite the same way again." Featured are interviews with doorstop collectors, authors of books on doorstops, doorstop testers, linguistic and philosophy professors, and no less than Gene Shalit—all expounding on the eponymous little objects. *Off the Ground & Off the Wall: A Doorstop Documentary*, Iron Frog Productions (617) 891-4507.

The salvation of humanity depends on the prevalence of one thing and one thing only. That's right, *hacky-sack*. Or, as they call that nimble-friendly little game in Latin America, *futbolito*. In **Futbolito: A Journey Through Central America** (28 min., VHS), Robbie Leppzer chronicles the adventures of a hacky-sack troupe as they wend their way over two months through Guatemala and Nicaragua, preaching the gospel of the bean-filled ball. Bequeathed by the ancients, hacky-sack has achieved craze status. In every village, the troupe initiates a game in the town square and ends up involving children, soldiers, and war widows, among others. A testament to populist ambassadorship, this documentary "offers a unique glimpse into the harsh realities of Central American life while affirming the enduring hope that prevails...in the midst of war." *Futbolito: A Journey Through Central America*, Turning Tide Productions, PO Box 864, Wendell, MA 01379; (508) 544-8313; fax: (508) 544-7989. Available in English and Spanish.

From the streets of Moscow comes Robin Hessman and James Longley's **Portrait of Boy with Dog** (26 min., 35mm), a cinema verité work examining one child's life amidst a city in crisis. Thirteen-year-old Gosha, abandoned by his parents, institutionalized in an uncaring system, speaks candidly of his contempt for authority, his malignant boredom, and his dreams of a new life. This film was shown on WGBH in May along with *The Struggle for Russia. Portrait of Boy with Dog* (in Russian with English subtitles), Robin Hessman, 12 Rolling Ridge Rd., Andover, MA 01810; (508) 475-2617; fax: (508) 256-4604.



Rock'n Gene Shalit and his doorstopping alter ego in *Off the Ground & Off the Wall*, by Gary Roma. Courtesy filmmaker



Saxophonist Wardell Gray (left) is the "forgotten tenor" in Abraham Ravett's documentary tribute, *The Forgotten Tenor*.
Courtesy filmmaker

According to filmmaker Abby Freedman, her own aging process was a key inspiration for adapting the great French writer Colette's story **La Fleur de l'Age** (21-1/2 min., video). Madeleine is much older, wealthier, and livelier than her husband Paul. Their relationship exists at the fulcrum of a constantly shifting power dynamic. At the same time, however, the complexities of their attraction to each other are revealed, culminating in an ironic ending that challenges viewers to reexamine conventional ideas about youthfulness and aging. Freedman mentions as an inspiration the findings of Boston University studies on the portrayal of older women in Hollywood. "As men grow older," Freedman writes, "according to Hollywood, they become more distinguished and powerful; as women grow older, they merely become wrinkled. I hope [the film] helps to put a new wrinkle in that notion." *La Fleur de l'Age*, Abby Freedman, Redhead Productions, 16 Aldersey St., Somerville, MA 02143; (617) 628-3769.

Wardell Gray, according to filmmaker Abraham Ravett, is considered "one of the greatest...tenor saxophonists in American Black Classical Music." Ever heard of him? That's why he's called the **Forgotten Tenor** (136 min., 16mm). Ravett uses rare archival footage, family photos, and memorabilia in combination with interviews with family and colleagues to pay tribute to this most unheralded of musicians. *Forgotten Tenor*, Abraham Ravett Films/Tapes, 193 Nonotuck St., Florence, MA 01060; (413) 586-6588; fax: (413) 582-5481.

Stephanie Cornell seems to have altered the karma of the puzzling disease that has afflicted her (as well as nearly 9 million other women) by dramatizing one woman's attempt to deal with it. **Scott's Story** (60 min., 16mm) follows its subject from diagnosis of endometriosis to eventual surgery and the removal of an ovary. Along the way, she must endure fear, anger, loss, and seclusion before regaining control. Endometriosis is a misunderstood disease that is frequently undetected or misdiagnosed. Characteristics include painful menstrual cramps, painful intercourse, and pelvic and lower back pain. It is the leading cause of infertility in women, but many sufferers feel ignored by the medical community and are frustrated when their pain is belittled or unheeded by doctors. Documentary accounts of women's battles with endometriosis are interwoven with the narrative to emphasize the "realness" of the disease. *Scott's Story*, Stephanie Cornell, Einapets Productions, 21 Cortes St., #5, Boston, MA 02116; (617) 292-0586.

Poetry happens. Leita Hagemann Luchetti, who has documented on film the life of Puerto

Continued on p. 40

CATHARTIC FILMWORKS
directors/producers



BY CATE MCQUAID

You might say the production company Cathartic Filmworks was born in the eye of a hurricane. It was August 1991, and Hurricane Bob was slamming into the New England coast. Richard Moos was working as a production assistant on the short-lived Fox TV series *Against the Law*, and Robert Patton-Spruill was hired on as another PA.

"It was 18-hour days, six-day weeks," Moos recalls. "We had a hurricane, and we were working in water three feet deep." Patton-Spruill continues, "I was ordered to watch the camera in the rain while everybody else went to get lunch. I worked one day as a PA and said, 'fuck this.'"

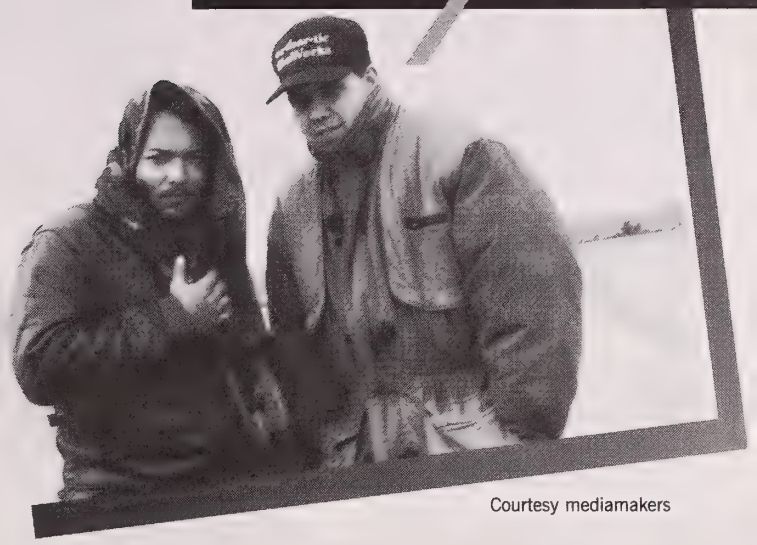
But Moos and Patton-Spruill met and made a connection. A few months later, Patton-Spruill was working for the Collinge-Pickman casting agency in Boston when Moos sent them the script for his first film, *Endocrine Secrets*. "They threw it in the garbage," Moos recalls. "But Rob picked it up and cast it on the sly."

Cathartic Filmworks was another year in the making. In the meantime, Patton-Spruill took off for New York to sow his wild oats. "It was the standard, out-of-college, woman-I'm-in-love-with move," he explains. "It didn't work, and I was back in nine months." He enrolled in the film program at Boston University and gave Moos a call. "I knew I liked Rich's work," Patton-Spruill recalls. "I would write and direct, and Rich would cut and shoot."

In the three years since, the trio has produced a variety of documentary and dramatic films. *Endocrine Secrets* was a walk through the psyche of straight male sexuality, and Cathartic's other shorts have touched on similarly gritty topics. *Interior Monologue* is a documentary that spends a day with an exotic dancer. *The Gaming Table*, adapted from Amiri Baraka's play *The Dutchman*, follows the intrigue of sex games at a dance party. They've taken the shorts on the festival circuit, and *The Gaming Table* won second prize at the International Black Film Festival in Oakland, California, in 1993. *The Gaming Table* and *Interior Monologue* shared first prize at the Sumner Redstone Festival, for Boston University alumni and student filmmakers, and took home $1,500.

In the past year, Cathartic has turned its sights to bigger, more saleable projects. They recently completed *The Arms of Atlas*, a feature-length documentary about Moroccan children who have lost touch with their spirituality as Western ideas seep into the local culture. They are now in postproduction on *Squeeze*, a dramatic feature about a good kid in Dorchester, Massachusetts, who falls in with the wrong crowd.

Filming *The Arms of Atlas* had a lot to do with kismet. The project was the brainchild of producers Stephanie Danan and Patricia Moreno, who hired the young duo to shoot and direct. "Stephanie and Patricia did incredible producing work," Moos enthuses. "They got us flown over there, drivers for us. We had carte blanche, an edict from the king that anyone should help us. We were shooting off a balcony in Marrakesh, and a Moroccan crew was also shooting, and a guy from the hotel came up to them and threw them out, because they didn't have the sheet of paper we had." As for funding, "Stephanie's a jet-setter from Morocco," Patton-Spruill says. "We got a buttload of in-kind donations. The Moroccan business moguls paid for it." And thanks to the circles Danan socializes in, Cathartic doesn't expect to have trouble distributing the film.



Courtesy mediamakers

"*The Arms of Atlas* fell out of the sky," admits Moos. "*Squeeze* has been different. Memos, negotiations, numbers going back and forth. We've been selling licenses and pieces of the film." *Squeeze* was shot last summer at the Dorchester Youth Collaborative (DYC), which spawned New Kids on the Block five years ago. "DYC is a built-in success package," says Patton-Spruill, noting that the organization's directors are "friends of Janet Reno and the President."

"*Squeeze* is unusual in that it's not your standard high-concept script," says Moos. Patton-Spruill jumps in, "It's about human things. We want to make the first black art film. *Do the Right Thing* was great, but too Hollywood. I'm thinking of something more *400 Blows*-ian. That New Wave French thing, that's what I love."

Patton-Spruill teaches acting at DYC, and his experience there inspired him to write the script for *Squeeze*. Writing is a collaborative effort that he leads. "It takes a long time to get to the point of a script being alive," he asserts. "We start with the germination of an idea, and I write something down and give it to Rich and Ian [Bearse, an independent producer the duo works with], and rewrite it again and again until we all love it. That's the beauty of being in this situation. I get two creative minds who make me look good."

"The whole idea of founding this company was to act as an umbrella that nurtured a philosophy about art and filmmaking," Moos explains. "A lot of it is in the name itself. Catharsis is fire and purging. It comes to a violent eruption, and you have this beautiful thing afterwards."

All Cathartic's works are available through the filmmakers: Cathartic Filmworks, 94 Rossmore Road, Jamaica Plain, MA; (617) 522-9150.

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Mary Kocol's photoanimated memories from *Is This Me?*
Courtesy filmmaker

Rican poet Efrain Ortiz, is coproducing (with WGBH) and directing an ongoing series called **Poetry Breaks**. The series features poets reading their work in short spots that air between programs; featured so far are Allan Ginsberg, Lucille Clifton, Galway Kinnell, Thylias Moss, and Robert Bly. *Poetry Breaks*, Lucille Hagemann Luchetti (617) 868-8811.

The geneaology of a friendship is the subject of **Ringl and Pit** (60 min., video), a documentary directed by Juan Mandelbaum. Grete Stern, aka Ringl, and Ellen Auerbach, aka Pit, trace their 65-year association back to 1928, when they cofounded a photo studio in Berlin and became pioneer women in the arts in Weimar Germany. The ensuing years, including escape from Nazi persecution and subsequent separate careers in London, New York, Palestine, and Argentina, are examined by Ringl and Pit themselves. The two women pore over old photos, telling the stories behind them and reflecting on their belated fame. (Their work has garnered attention in recent years as Bauhaus-era photography is being rediscovered.) *Ringl and Pit*, Geovision, Inc., 1166 Beacon St., Brookline, MA 02146; (617) 739-0305; fax: (617) 739-0325.

Director Catherine Burns has added her take on the current rage for serial killer drama with **A Pound of Flesh** (75 min., 16mm). The film's juice concerns a young couple who have stolen luggage from an airport and are thereafter targeted by a well-mannered psycho for accidentally discovering an illegal organ donor ring. John Lithgow offspring Ian makes his debut here. *A Pound of Flesh*, Pet Stop Pictures, 352 The Riverway #15, Boston, MA 02115; (617) 556-3849; fax: (617) 556-3889.

In Mary Kocol's new work, memories are evoked and experiences relived as a family looks through their photo album. This otherwise low-key event is made dynamic by Kocol's choice of form: **Is This Me?** (5 min., 16mm) uses photo-animation to tell the story. Hundreds of photographs build up to form a collage, and then a new one as the action changes. *Is This Me?*, KocoMotion Productions, PO Box 441467, Somerville, MA 02144; (617) 623-2494.

•

Big Concrete Place; collage animation piece in which a mysterious fly steals a screw from protagonist's head. Contact: Luke Jaeger, Box 614, Northampton, MA 01060; (413) 586-4654.

B-Boyz; feature film about Black politician who returns to old neighborhood to take revenge



against gang members. Contact: B-Down Filmworks (508) 635-9780.

Slack Trek: The X Generation; film shot in 16mm, Hi8, and video, then deconstructed into interactive video format. Sci-fi adventure comedy set 200 years in the future. Contact: 21st Century Fish Prod., 129 St. Botolph St., ste. 4, Boston, MA 02115.

Farmin' Log; 35-min. video about Midwest girl in Boston who discovers her roots in a local rib restaurant. Contact: Sarah Smiley, 23 Evergreen St., #2, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130; (617) 524-3547; sarah smiley @BMUGBOS.ORG.

A Beer by Any Other Name...; a 60-min. instructional video that provides a complete overview of beer. Contact: Saltbox Productions, PO Box 46, Nantucket, MA 02554; (800) 556-BEER.

The Mad Songs of Fermanda Hussein; a dramatic feature set in Mexico during the time period of the Persian Gulf War. Anticipated late summer 1995 release. Contact: John Gianvito, Prospect Films, 15A Mount Vernon St., Arlington, MA 02174; (617) 643-5211.

Bui/Doi/The Dust of Life; 16mm feature combining doc and narrative storytelling. Explores week in the life of a 25-year-old single mother. Contact: Jared Katsiane, c/o Farrago Films, 43 Lawrence St., Boston, MA 02116; (617) 247-6171.

Counter Clockwise; feature film about three twentysomethings living rent-free against the gears of a giant clock tower. Directed by Natalie Sternberg. Contact: PB&J Entertainment Grp., Ltd., 1513 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02174; (617) 646-6753.

Something Should Be Done About Grandma Ruthie; 60 min. video doc by Cary Stauffacher portrays events that lead to grandmother's frustration with her own forgetfulness. Contact: Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (617) 524-0980.

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By Kathryn Bowser

LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE BY *THE INDEPENDENT*'S PUBLICATION DATE, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT FESTIVALS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PRINTS OR TAPES. IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THIS COLUMN'S RELIABILITY, FIVF ENCOURAGES ALL FILM- AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT THE FIVF PROGRAM DIRECTOR WITH CORRECTIONS OR PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES.

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ASPEN SHORTSFEST, Feb. 23-26, CO. Short films of all genres accepted for all-shorts fest, originally part of Aspen FilmFest. Fest annually receives over 400 entries (all competition entrants must live & work in US). Running time must be under 30 min. Awards incl. Best of Fest, First Prize, Jury Awards & Special Recognition Award. Over $5,000 in awards, incl. $2,500 Best of Fest Award. Fest one of qualifying contests in US for Oscar nominations. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Dec. 10. Contact: Ellen Kohner, Aspen ShortsFest, PO Box 8910, 601 E. Bleeker, Aspen, CO 81612; (303) 925-6882; fax: (303) 925-1967.

ATLANTA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, GA. Competitive fest, now in 19th yr, organized by media arts center IMAGE & dedicated to "innovative & entertaining" prods. About 60 films screened at IMAGE, High Museum of Art & other theaters. $8,000 in cash & equipment prizes awarded to entries in dramatic, experimental, animated, doc, student & other cats. Film & video awarded separately. Small honorarium given for exhibited work. Fest has enthusiastic local audience & extensive local press coverage. Entries must have been completed since Jan. 1992; Industrials, commercials, work done for corp. clients ineligible. Entry fee: $40 individual/$30 students; $25 additional late fee between deadline & 1st wk of Jan.; SASE or return postage required. Formats: 35mm (preview on cassette only) 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Anne Hubbell, Atlanta Film & Video Fest, IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., ste. J2, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4254 (fest hotline)/352-4225; fax: (404) 352-0653.

BACA/BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, NY. Short (under 60 min.) ind. films & videos accepted for fest, now in 30th yr. Industrial & instructional films ineligible. Selected films receive special award certificates. Selection jury consists of members of Nat'l Academy of TV Arts & Sciences & filmmakers, critics, distributors & curators. Highest scoring works screened publicly at various NYC locations, incl. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jefferson Market Library, BACA Downtown, Millenium, Anthology. Work also shown on Brooklyn public access. Entry fee: $45. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2" cassette. Deadline: late Dec. Send letter to request appl. Contact: Mark Dannat, BACA/Brooklyn Arts Council Film & Video Fest, 195 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn, NY 11201; (718) 625-0080; fax: (718) 625-3294.

CINE ESTUDIANTIL, Mar. 7-11, CA. Only fest in US solely dedicated to student films/videos depicting Chicano/Latino/Native American experience, now in 2nd yr. Sponsored by Centro Cultural de la Raza, fest will incl. screenings throughout San Diego & Tijuana community, discussions w/ filmmakers & catalogue. Entries must be made by, about, or for the Chicano/Latino/Native American community & completed by students enrolled in educ. institution during time of prod., between 1992-94. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette. Entry fee: $5 (payable to Centro Cultural de la Raza). Deadline: Nov. 15. Contact: Ethan van Thillo, Cine Estudiantil 1995, c/o Centro Cultural de la Raza, 2125 Park Blvd., San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 235-6135 x. 17.

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 30-Apr. 9, OH. Over 60 features & 100 shorts from 25 countries screened for audiences of 22,000. Cash prizes in several shorts cats, incl. best doc short & best OH short w/ awards of $500-1,000 each. Program incl. competitive ind. film series by young & student filmmakers. Special sections of family films, lesbian/gay films, films from E. Europe & US ind. features. Entry fee: $25/short (under 45 min.) & $50/feature (over 45 min.) Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: David Wittkowsky, Cleveland Int'l Film Festival, 1621 Euclid Ave., #428, Cleveland, OH 44115; (216) 623-0400; fax: (216) 623-0103.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Spring, NY. The only nationally recognized fest to focus on human rights is programmed by Human Rights Watch, leading int'l human rights monitoring organization. 6th edition of fest, held in NY & LA, will present approx. 70 fiction, doc, experimental & animated films & videos, incl. works-in-progress. Entries should address human rights issues, e.g., political prisoners, abuses of people, freedom of expression, oppressed minorities & indigenous populations, racial/gender discrimination. Work may be any length. Selected works travel to cities in US & overseas. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 31. Contact: Bruni Burres/Heather Harding, Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 485 Fifth Ave., 3rd fl., NY, NY 10017; (212) 972-8400; fax: 0905.

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, Mar. 17-Apr. 2, NY. Prestigious fest, estab. in 1974, surveys world cinema to capacity audiences at Museum of Modern Art. Dedicated to discovery of new & recognized narrative features, docs & shorts. 20-25 programs shown; no specific cats. Shorts programmed w/ features. Cosponsored by MoMA's Dept. of Film & Film Society of Lincoln Center, which presents NY Film Festival. No entry fee; entrants pay shipping. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Jan. 3. Contact: New Directors/New Films, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Ctr. Plaza, NY, NY 10023-6595; (212) 875-5610; fax: 5636.

OUT IN VIDEO FESTIVAL OF LESBIAN/GAY NARRATIVE SHORTS, Spring, CA. Submissions of dramatic works under 30 min. that are avail. for exhibition on 3/4" accepted. Screenings to be held in San Francisco. *Out in Video* is quarterly newsletter featuring news & reviews about latest nonpornographic lesbian/gay home videos, movie classics, new theatrical releases, festival programs & works-in-prod. Entry fee: $5 (payable to Persona Press). Deadline: open, but submit ASAP. Contact: Nilow Diaman, Out in Video, Box 14022, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 775-6143.

RAINY STATES FILM FESTIVAL, Feb 16-19, Seattle. Sponsored by Allied Arts Foundation, first annual fest aims to promote works of Northwest filmmakers by producing event that showcases ind. films from Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington & British Columbia. All works must orginate on film. All genres/lengths considered. Screening formats: 35mm, 16mm & video projection. Deadline: Dec 2. Entry fee: $15. Write or call for entry form. Contact: Rainy States Film Festival, 1136 13th Ave., ste. C, Seattle, WA 98122-4405; (206) 322-3572.

SAN ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL, Feb 1-5, 1995, TX. America's largest & oldest Chicano/Latino film & video fest seeks films/video by or about Latinos or of direct relevance to Latino community. Must have been completed in last 2 yrs. Sponsored by Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, fest will bring together film- & videomakers, academics, actors & writers for screenings, workshops, seminars & presentations. Prizes awarded in narrative, doc, experimental, animation & first work cats. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"& VHS NTSC video. Send VHS for preview. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: Nov. 15. For entry form, contact: CineFestival, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, 1300 Guadelupe St., San Antonio, TX 78207; (210) 271-3151; fax: 3480.

UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 10, NJ. 7th annual fest, held at Rutgers Univ., accepts any genre (animation, doc, experimental, fiction, personal, etc.) that has originated on S-8 film or 8mm video. Fest mandate is "spreading the Super 8 word." All work screened by panel, which awards $1,000 in cash & prizes to about 10-15 works. Touring program selected from finalists of previous 3 yrs goes to nat'l/int'l variety of media art centers, fests & univs. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Jan. 20. Contact: United States S-8 Film/Video Festival, Rutgers Film Co-op, Program in Cinema Studies, Rutgers Univ., 43 Mine St., New Brunswick, NJ 08903; (908) 932-8482.

Foreign

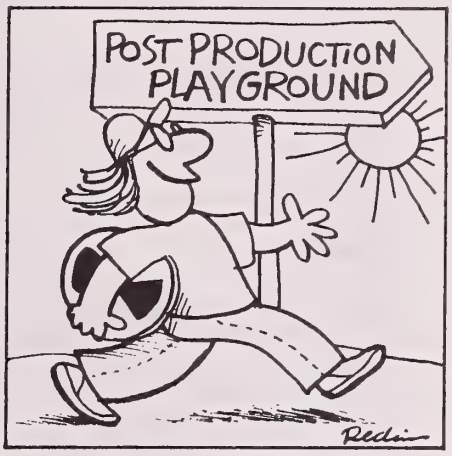
BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL: The October listing for Berlin omitted the U.S. contact: For entry forms and information, contact: Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85 St. #3W, NY, NY 10024; (212) 877-6856 tel & fax.

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 7-22, Hong Kong. Now in 19th yr, fest shows 170 features, shorts, videos & some animated works from over 30 countries. Int'l section made of up 70 entries from 20 countries. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Dec. 30. Contact: Hong Kong Int'l Film Festival, Level 7, Administration Bldg., Hong Kong Cultural Centre, 10 Salisbury Rd., Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong; tel: 011 852 734-2903; fax: 011 852 366-5206.

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, Singapore. FIAPF-recognized invitational fest for features, shorts, docs & animation; noncompetitive & competitive section for Asian cinema w/ award for best Asian feature. Fest accepts features completed after Jan. 94. Entries must be Singapore premieres. Audience about 40,000. Main section shows 35mm & some 16mm; all formats shown in fringe programs. Fest also has Children's/Young Adult section. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4". Contact: Philip Cheah, director, Singapore Int'l Film Fest, 168 Kim Seng Rd., Singapore 0923; tel: 011 65 738 7567; fax: 011 65 738 7578.

TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, March 8-12, Finland. Celebrating 25th yr as major stop in int'l short film fest circuit, competitive fest annually shows over 300 animated, doc & fiction films from nearly 40 countries to audiences of over 20,000. This yr special screenings will highlight centenary of cinema & silver anniv. of fest. Screenings also incl. British animation, Caribbean shorts, film school specials, long nights of shorts & treasures from film archives. Competition incl. about 100 int'l entries. Children's films accepted in any cat. Int'l jury makes following awards: Grand Prix: bronze statuette Kiss & FIM 25,000 (US$5,000 for best film); best film in each cat: statuette & FIM 4,000 (US$800); diplomas of merit; cash prizes. Competition entries must be 35 min. or less & have had 1st public screening on or after Jan. 1, 1994. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Tampere Int'l Short Film Fest, PO Box 305, 33101 Tampere, Finland; tel: 011 358 31 213 0034/223 5681; fax; 011 358 31 223 0121.



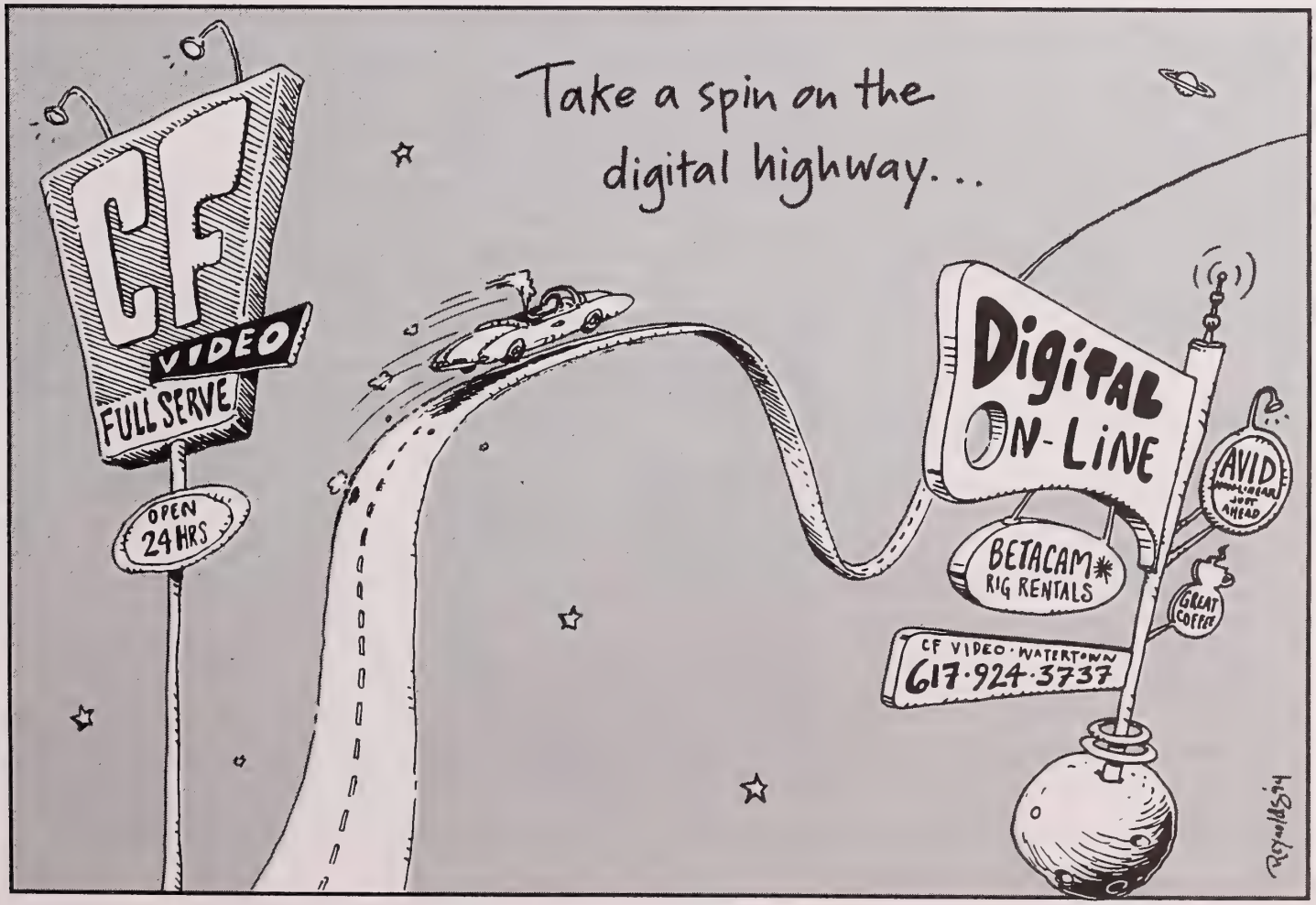


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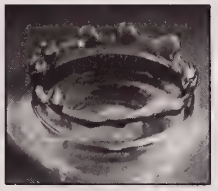
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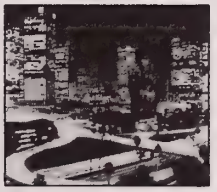
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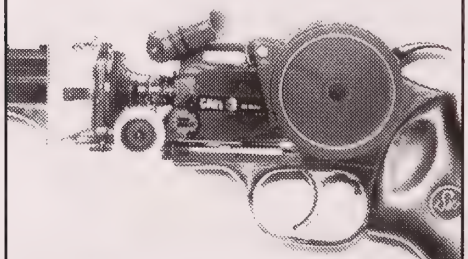
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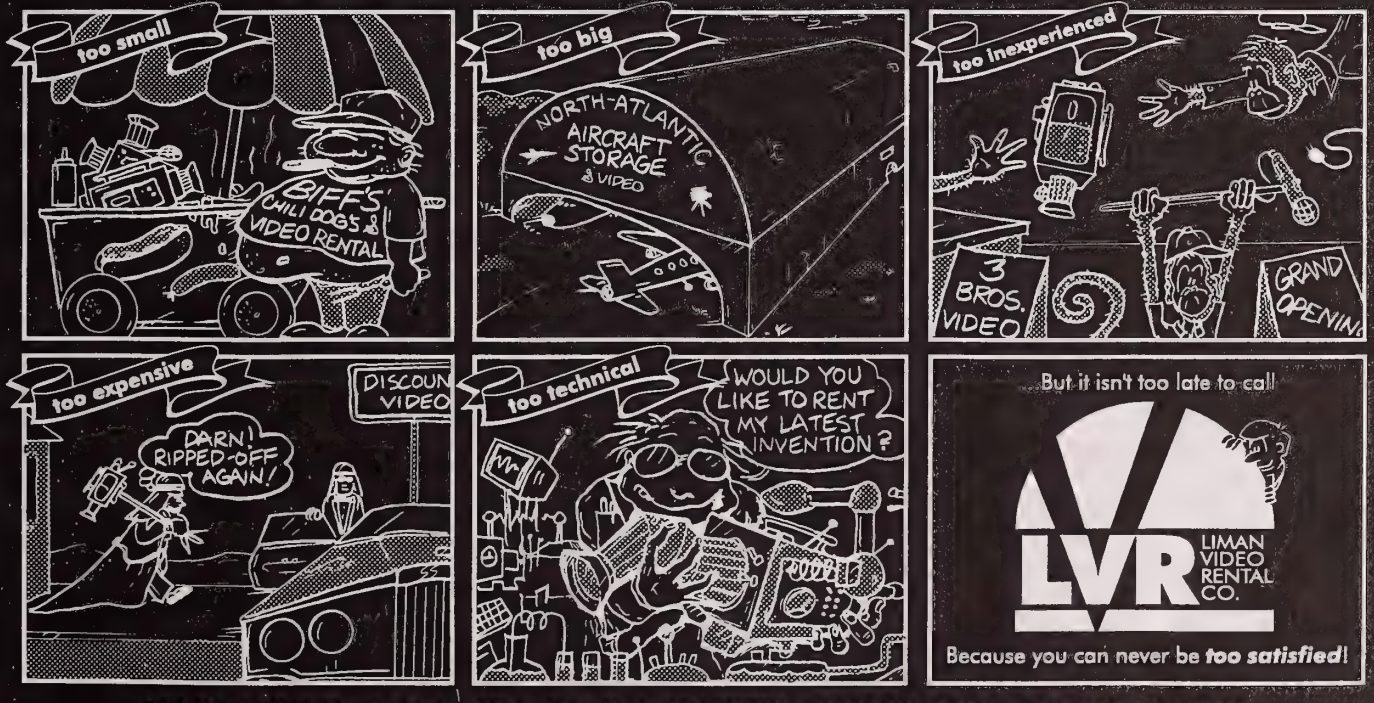
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FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

IFFCON: INTERNATIONAL FILM FINANCING CONFERENCE, 3-day event (Jan. 13-15, 1995) in San Francisco, linking US ind. filmmakers searching for financing w/ int'l buyers & producers interested in US coprods. Incl. roundtables, private meetings & receptions. Limited to 60 participants, chosen through selection process. Deadline: Nov. 8. Presented by EBS Productions & Film Arts Foundation. For info & appls, call (415) 281-9777.

SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE holds extension education classes in fine art filmmaking. For more info or to register, call: (415) 749-5554.

UC SANTA CRUZ EXTENSION PROGRAM offers certificates in graphic design & visual communication. For more info or to register, call: (408) 427-6660.

Films • Tapes Wanted

47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, resumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), resumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899-9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest, (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET, nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, at (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o *Screen Magazine*, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CELEBRATED CUCARACHA THEATER seeks 16mm films for series of Tuesday night screenings in Jan. & Feb. 1995. Send 1/2" tapes to Chris Oldcorn/Janet Paparazzo, c/o Cucaracha, 500 Greenwich Street, NY, NY 10013.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Al Johnston, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for

L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on the aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

GROWING UP FEMALE, Univ. of Michigan video showcase, seeks experimental videos by women on what it means to be female. Personal expressions, cultural explorations in all genres. Deadline: Oct. 18. Send VHS copy & SASE to: Bettina Fabos, 2020 Frieze, U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1285; (313) 769-6819.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) made by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have a chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi-8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o HI-8, 12 West End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" videotape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

INFO ON JAPANESE-AMERICANS SOUGHT by NY film journalist & assist. to foreign fests. Needs info on videos & film on Japanese-Americans before, during & after Pacific War. All topics, all genres. Send copy w/ synopsis, length, prices, name & address, to: Gordon Hitchens, 214 W. 85th St., Apt. 3W, NY, NY 10024-3914.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 West Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS

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LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi-8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYC-AREA TV PRODUCER is creating TV pilot about ind. filmmakers & is seeking filmmakers w/ current or upcoming projects to be featured in pilot. Call Paul Mulcahy (212) 865-7462.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME AT P.S.122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S.122, 150 First Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatamala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 South Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, one to 60 min. long. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for first nat'l story! Submit now to: EDGE Television, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SHORT FILMS WANTED for "Twilight Zone-type" anthology series. Looking for short (up to 30 mins.) films in color, covering suspense, thriller, fantasy, science fiction, action/adventure & light horror. Prefer strong narrative films w/ plots twists & surprise endings. For more info, call (310) 396-3115.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit resumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

SOCIETY FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC EDUCATION (SPE) seeks videos for 1995 National Conference. Curated video program of short (under 30 min.) work by, for & about women. Special emphasis on tapes that address issues of Freedom of Speech, Religion & Expression. Deadline Dec. 1. Send VHS tape, reviews, synopsis & SASE for tape return to: Lynn Estomin, 97-1/2 Parkwood St., Williamsport, PA 17701.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or under-

water & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Makiko Ito, Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE NEWZ, half-hour, late-night comedy TV show based on topical news events, is actively seeking submissions. Footage will be showcased on national series. Formats: D-2, Beta SP, Beta, 3/4", Super VHS, VHS, or Hi-8. Cats: News-style stock shots (skylines, panoramas, local landmarks, local sports icons, etc.) & comedic shots. Must include signed submissions release for stock footage. For info or release form, contact: The Newz Submission Line (407) 354-6590.

TV POLONIA is looking for entertainment, family, sports, drama & reality programming to fill cable TV channel sent to Poland in English w/ Polish translations. For more info, send SASE to Stefani Kelly, Southfield Park Tower 1 #700, 12835 E. Arapahoe Rd., Englewood, CO 80112.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104, or call (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape with SASE to: Film Committee, UICA, 88 Monroe Ave NW, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, manager of broadcast projects & acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new prime-time series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under one hour; completed; all rights cleared. Pays $35/min. for 3 releases over 2 years. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

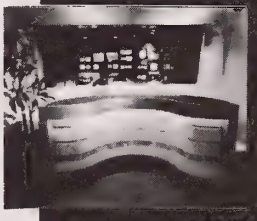
WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TRAINEES for '95 Asst. Dir. Training Program, joint venture of Directors Guild of America & Alliance of Motion Picture & Television Producers. Appls now being accepted; completed appls & supporting documents must be postmarked no later than Dec. 16. For appl., write: 15503 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436-3140.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR (tenure track) in video prod. to begin Aug. 1995. Send vita, 3 letters of recco & samples of creative/scholarly work by Dec. 1 to: M.A. Fitzpatrick, Comm. Arts, UW-Madison, Madison, WI 53706. EOE/AA. Finalists cannot be guaranteed confidentiality.

EXPERIENCED AVID EDITOR w/ access to Avid editing system needed to teach asst. film editor fundamentals & finer points. Will pay or barter services. Call (718) 625-2965.

FILM/VIDEO CHAIRPERSON needed for 25-year-old BA/MFA Film/Video department at Columbia College in Chicago. Appls & nominations now being accepted for position avail. June 1, 1995. Requirements are: substantial experience in film/video prod.; commitment to film education; budgetary & fund raising skills; knowledge of new & tradition techniques; ability to develop relationships in industry & extensive administrative abilities. Competitive salary & excellent benefits. Minority & women applicants encouraged to apply. Submit resumé & statement of teaching philosophy (no phone calls please) to: Film/Video Chair Search, Human Resources Department, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605.

PROFESSOR OF ELECTRONIC/VIDEO ART sought by Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute. Must be visual artist specializing in electronic intermedia, interactive systems, installation & performance. Online integrated media studio, arts-related software or hardware development & critical theory desirable. Begin Jan. 1995. F/t, tenure-track appointment, teaching grad & undergrad courses, requires terminal dergree or equivalent professional recognition. Send resumé, cover letter, 3 reccos & work samples to: Faculty Searches, IEAR Studios, DCC 135, RPI, Troy, NY 12180; (518) 276-4778; fax: 276-4780. EOE.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NY (SUNY) AT PLATTSBURGH invites applicants for f/t, tenure-track position in Dept. of Communication to begin spring or fall 1995. Duties incl.: teaching basic & advanced courses in studio or field video prod. Experience teaching 1 or more of following desirable: Digital Audio/Video Postprod., Writing for Media &/or Video Aesthetics. Qualifications: Masters & at least 3 yrs professional &/or teaching experience. (Doctoral degree, scholarly writing & interest in assisting w/ student-produced TV operation desired.) Academic rank & salary negotiable. Opportunities for summer teaching & research/prod. grants avail. Review of appls. will begin Nov. 1; appls. accepted until position filled. Send letter, resumé, video portfolio & 3 lette5rs of recco to: Chair, search committee, c/o Office of Personnel, SUNY Plattsburgh, Box 1832-1001; Plattsburgh, NY 12901. EOE.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for

Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

PUBLICATIONS

ARCHITECTURE ON SCREEN, publication of Program for Art on Film, Metropolitan Museum of Art & J. Paul Getty Trust, is selective guide to more than 900 films, videos & videodiscs in fields of architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation & city & regional planning. Book is avail. from G.K. Hall & Co. for $65. To order, call (800) 257-5755.

CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL has published 32-pg. resource guide designed to help teachers use 7 African feature films recently released by California Newsreel in wide variety of college courses. Containing brief introductory essays on each film, teaching selections & select bibliographies, expanded catalog enables colleges & public libraries to build in-depth video collections of African cinema. For free copy, contact: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

CALL FOR PAPERS: anthology of critical essays concerning video/film prod. is being compiled. Purpose of text is to provide alternative source of info from traditional prod. textbooks, which tend to be equipment-oriented. Focus will be on think pieces covering wide range of aesthetic, analytical & critical/cultural concerns that will benefit students in prod. work. Submit manuscripts or extended abstracts in triplicate by Dec. 15 to: Kathryn Lasky, Dept. of Communication, University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME 01403; (202) 780-5031; fax: (202) 780-5739.

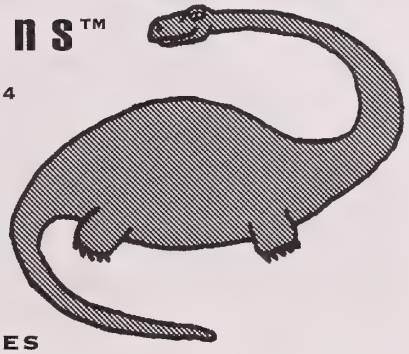
CD-ROM ART/CULTURE MAGAZINE seeks contributors. Bicoastal, interactive multimedia pub. (accessible as computer interface) will incorporate video, text, sound & graphics. Seeking work from writers & artists in all media. Focus is on formal experimentation & mixed media compositions. Themes incl.: media criticism, cybernetics, found sound/imagery & information overload. Send submissions (film/videomakers should submit VHS format) to: GUSH Metamedia, PO Box 3291, NY, NY 10185. For more info, contact Adam (718) 858-9379 or Jack (415) 776-9400.

CHICAGO FILMLETTER, 3-year-old magazine for those into film/TV prod., is now under new owner/publisher. Every month *FilmLetter* covers both ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes, & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info, contact: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 235-3456.

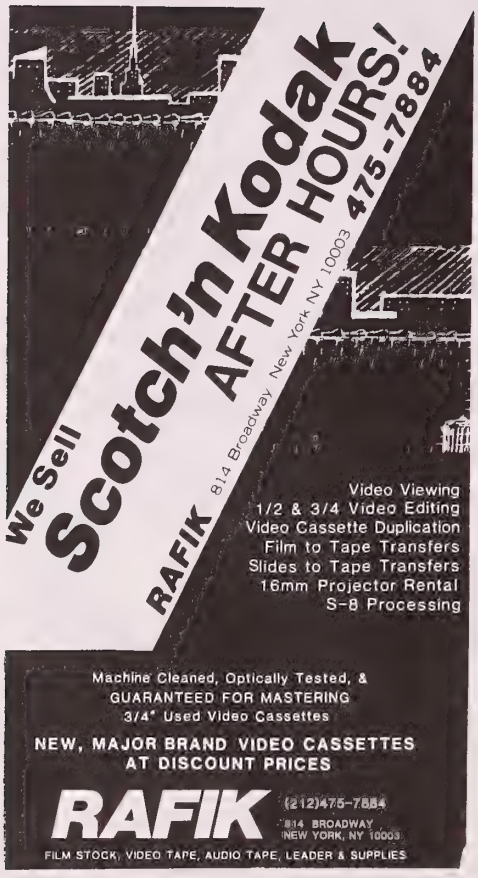
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GAUNTLET, Exploring Limits of Free Expression, is open forum on First Amendment Rights covering issues of pornography, racism, film censorship, media manipulation, prostitution, cults, sexual harassment, etc. For copies or more info, send a SASE to: Barry Hoffman, Editor, 309 Powell Rd., Sept. PR94A, Springfield, PA 19064

GUIDE FOR NONTENURED FACULTY MEMBERS (monograph #6), publication of University Film & Video Association, is avail. by writing: Editor, Journal of Film & Video, Dept. of Communication, Georgia State Univ., University Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303-3080.

GUIDELINES TO INTERNATIONAL PROD.: Info on shooting overseas. Topics cover everything from pre- to postprod. Incl. chapters on int'l standards & formats, insurance, using foreign crew, int'l contacts & tips on how to keep out of jail. Written by David Calderwood, experienced int'l producer, respected conference presenter & widely published author. Send $15 to: Euro-Pacific Productions, 703 Broad Street, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702. (908) 530-4451.

INDEX ON CENSORSHIP, magazine for free speech, is produced 6 times/yr. in paperback format. Avail. by subscription. 1 yr. for $48. Send check or credit card info (Visa, MC, Amex) to: Index on Censorship, Lancaster House, 33 Islington High St., London N1 9LH. Fax subscription inquiries to: 011 44 71 278-1878.

JACK MACKEREL VIDEO MAGAZINE, quarterly video compilation on VHS videocassette, is accepting submissions of short films, music videos, docs, interviews w/ artists, erotica, computer-generated imagery & animation & video/film whatnot. Send contributions (VHS format) to Jack Mackerel Video Magazine, PO Box 80024, Minneapolis, MN 55408-8024; attn.: Greg Bachar. (Send $5 cash for sample volume.)

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for $14.95 + shipping & handling. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., area M, NY, NY 10019.

NAMAC offers member directory w/ up-to-min. compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media-arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org. history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC ($15 nonmembers/$10 NAMAC members) to: NAMAC, 655 13th St., ste. 201, Oakland, CA 94612.

NAT'L ENDOWMENT FOR HUMANITIES 27th Annual Report is avail. Contains info on endowment programs & complete listing of grants. Report is free. Send requests to: NEH 1992 Annual Report, Rm. 407, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' Strategic Plan, a 24-page booklet on NVR's strategic planning process & results. For free copy, write or call: National Video Resources, Inc., 73 Spring St., ste 606, NY, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artist's right as well as federal & state law. To request copy, call People for the American Way (202) 467-4999.

SIX ROUTES TO FILM FINANCING, free tip sheet published by Hollywood Film Institute, breaks down 6 basic ways producers can finance films. For free copy, contact: Hollywood Film Institute, PO Box 481252, Dept. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 933-3456.

VIDEOS FOR A CHANGING WORLD, new catalog of multicultural & social issue video documentaries. Videos in collection relate to common themes of building bridges across cultures & working for grassroots social change. Topics include: indiginous peoples, Central America, environmental issues, cross-cultural music & theater, oral history, etc. Avail. free of charge. Contact: Turning Tide Productions, P.O. Box 864, Wendell, MA 01379; (800) 557-6414, (508) 544-8313; fax. (508) 544-7989.

WHO FUNDS PTV? CPB pamphlet containing listings of public-TV series, entities, & organizations that provide funding to ind. producers. To obtain copy of third edition, send SASE to: Who Funds PTV?, CPB Publications Office, 901 E St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004-2037.

Resources • Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE is accepting entries for 1994 Robert Bennett Award recognizing excellence in local TV programming. Entries must be at least 30 min., aired in US between July 1, 1993 & Sept. 30, 1993, produced by local station or ind. & telecast in local market. For appls & guidelines, write: The Robert M. Bennett Award, c/o AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90027-1625; (213) 856-7787.

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris at (612) 341-0755.

CENTER FOR MEDIA, CULTURE AND HISTORY AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY announces Rockefeller Humanities Fellowships. Scholars, media makers & cultural activists invited to apply for 1- or 2-semester residencies to develop projects on how social movements & countercultural communities, past & present, have used film, video & TV to forge collective identities around issues such as AIDS, labor, feminism, ecology & the rights of gay men & lesbians. Deadline: Jan. 20, 1995. Contact: Barbara Abrash or Faye Ginsburg, NYU Center for Media, Culture & History, 25 Waverly Place, NY, NY 10003; (212) 998-3759.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.



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For Information /Entry Forms Contact: Al Nigrin, Director, 1995 U.S. Super 8mm Film/Video Festival, Rutgers Film Co-op, Rutgers University, 43 Mine Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903 (908) 932-8482; (908) 932-1935 FAX

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DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for $500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER is now accepting appls. for its 5-day, video image processing residency program. Must have previous experience in video prod.; all genres welcome. Appls. must incl. resume, video of recent work (3/4" or VHS), SASE & project description indicating how image processing is integrated into work. Deadline: Dec. 15. For more info, contact: Experimental TV Center, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

FUNDING EXCHANGE's Paul Robeson Fund for Ind. Media's accepts appls. for doc film & video projects in preprod. or distribution stages only. Deadline: Dec. 1. Grant decisions will be announced by March 30, 1995. Projects must address critical political & social issues, have highly developed distribution initiative & have ability to be used for political advocacy &/or organizing purposes. Producers utilizing alternative forms of social issue doc making are encouraged to apply. Appls will not be faxed. Write or call: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

INTERMEDIA ARTS/MCKNIGHT INTERDISCPLINARY FELLOWSHIPS is offering 5 awards of $12,000 to artists producing innovative interdisciplinary work. Deadline: Nov. 10. Contact: Melanie Nyberg or Al Kosters, 425 Ontario St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 Fifth Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications ($35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, exec. director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

MACDOWELL COLONY seeks film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artist community in Petersborough, NH. Deadlines:

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embership provides you with a ar's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals*—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with a festival consultant for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country, call the office for the one nearest you. *Plus*, members are carrying on an active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information in person or on the phone about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs.
Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

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NATIONAL WRITERS WORKSHOP is accepting screenplays for annual screenwriting contest from ethnic minorities within L.A. & across US. The Ethnic Minority Screenwriters Development & Promotional Program offers $500 scholarship per winning screenplay, plus exposure to agents, studios, producers & directors. Deadline: Dec. 16. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ .52 postage to: National Writers Workshop/Ethnic Minority Contest, P.O. Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENTS FOR THE ARTS is accepting grant appls for TV & radio grants. Deadline: Dec. 10. For more info, contact: NEA, The Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 682-5452.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of the last 3 yrs., or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION announces start of awards program recognizing outstanding work in oral history in several cats. In 1995, award will be made for nonprint format production, incl. film, video, radio program or series, exhibition, or drama that makes significant use of oral history to interpret historical subject. Deadline: April 1, 1995. For more info, write: Jan Dodson Barnhart, executive secretary, Oral History Association, Box 3968, Albuquerque, NM 87190-3968.

PENNYSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites appls for 1995-96 scholars-in-residence program. Provides support for f/t research study at any of facilities maintained by Commission for 4 to 12 consecutive weeks between May 1, 1995 & April 30, 1996 at rate of $1,200/mo. Program open to college & university affiliated scholars, incl. grad students, ind. researchers, public-sector professionals, writers & others. Dealine: Jan. 20, 1995. For info, contact: Division of History, PA Historical & Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed- media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr, $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, director of grants programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

SOUTHERN HUMANITIES MEDIA FUND is accepting grant proposals for film/video prods of American South from nonprofit organizations chartered in AL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA & W. VA. Deadline: March 6, 1995. For appls & info., contact:

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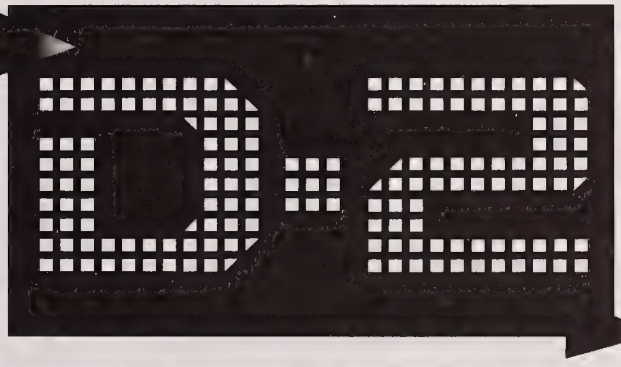
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TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media arists should contact Arts International for 1994 appls. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

UTAH ARTS COUNCIL offers grants to encourage development, to support realization of specific artistic ideas & to recognize significant contribution artists make to creative environment of Utah. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1995. For info, contact: Tey Haines, Utah Arts Council, 617 E. South Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84102-1177; (801) 533-5895.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPWRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive $500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers & directors. This program continues throughout the year. For submission info, send legal size SASE with .52 postage to: Willard Rogers, The Writers Workshop National Contest, P.O.Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

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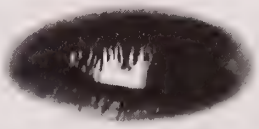
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By Pamela Calvert

NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

We welcome the following new and re-elected members to the AIVF board: Joe Berlinger, James Klein, Diane Markrow, and Robert Richter were elected to three-year terms, and Melissa Burch was elected to a two-year term. (The difference in term length is necessary to facilitate the transition from two- to three-year terms as voted by the members in last year's elections. The top four vote-getters received the longer terms.) Peter Lewnes is first alternate, and Yvonne Welbon is second alternate. A big *thank you* to the volunteers who contributed a day to counting the ballots: Kevin Cunningham, Cecelia Gilchriest, Erin McGonigle, and Elizabeth Multer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WORKSHOPS

BREAKING IN: GETTING STARTED AS A PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

You're new in the business, fresh out of school, just moved to New York, and all you hear is "It's not what you know, it's who you know." Anthony Bregman, director of production, and Mary Jane Skalski, director of development at independent production company Good Machine (*Eat Drink Man Woman, What Happened Was...*), will talk about how to get your foot in the door and the resources available to help you keep moving up. Participants will receive printed materials defining jargon and standard expectations of PA's on the set to help you with making that all-important good first impression. *Limited to 20 participants; pre-payment required.*

When: Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 pm
Where: AIVF offices
Price: $20 AIVF members; $25 others

LEGAL WORKSHOP: RIGHTS AND FAIR USE

AIVF and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts co-sponsor this workshop to cover some of the common questions faced by filmmakers: how to acquire rights to literary properties, music, and life stories; and the ins and outs of "fair use," including use of news stories, in media productions. The workshop will be moderated by Lawrence Sapadin, attorney and former director of AIVF/FIVF; attorneys and filmmaker panelists. *This event will be online-enhanced; questions for the panelists will be solicited on our America Online bulletin board, Artswire and the WELL, and a full report of the event will be posted there afterwards.*

Limited to 30 participants; pre-payment required.

When: Thursday, November 17, 5:30 - 8 pm
Where: VLA Conference Room, 1 E. 53rd St., NYC
Price: $20 AIVF members; $25 others

MEET AND GREETS

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.*

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"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, and connect with the AIVF community across the country.

Chicago:
When: November 8, December 13, 7:30 pm
Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 West Division Street

Denver:
Call office for date and location. Denver's salon started in September, with an event generously hosted by the Colorado Film and Video Association and featuring new AIVF board member Diane Markrow of Boulder.

Los Angeles:*
When: November 2, December 7, 7 pm
Where: Lou de Chris Cafe, 8164 Melrose (beside Improv)
* *note new day and location!*

New York:
When: November 15, December 20, 6-8 pm
Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 2nd Avenue (9th St.)

Washington, DC:
Call AIVF for date and location.

BOSTON, PHILADELPHIA & SANTA FE MEMBER MEETINGS

In November, AIVF will co-sponsor joint member gatherings with Newton Television Foundation and the Philadelphia Independent Film & Video Association, and executive director Ruby Lerner will meet with Santa Fe members. Come meet the staff, share plans and ideas, and be part of some forward-looking discussions.

Boston:
Joint member gathering and launch party for *The Independent*'s Boston issue. Join *The Independent* editor Patricia Thomson, managing editor Michele Shapiro, publisher/AIVF executive director Ruby Lerner, and director of programs and services Pamela Calvert.
When: Thursday, November 3, 7:00 pm
Where: Newton Television Foundation, 1608 Beacon Street, Newton, MA; (508) 528-7279.

Philadelphia:
Joint membership potluck with Ruby Lerner & Pamela Calvert; discussion of possibilities for cosponsored programs with AIVF and PIFVA.
When: Monday, November 7, 7:00 pm
Where: PIFVA, International House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA; (215) 387-5125.

Santa Fe:
Call office for update.

SALONS GO NATIONAL!

Members are organizing AIVF salons in Austin, TX, Stamford, CT, Durham, NC, Phoenix, AZ & Kansas City, MO! For specific info on where and when, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices for a half-hour briefing on the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the resource library. *RSVP appreciated.*

When: Monday, November 14, 5:30 pm.
Where: AIVF offices

In the Boston area?

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If *The Independent* is not available at *your* favorite Boston-area bookseller, please call our national distributor, Ingram Periodicals, toll-free at (800)627-6247.
Also, look for *The Independent* at upcoming Boston-area film festivals.

ATTENTION CLASSIFIED ADVERTISERS

Beginning with the January/February 1995 issue, *The Independent*'s cover price will increase by 25 cents, from $3.50 to $3.75 ($5 in Canada). Also, classified advertising rates will increase for nonmembers of AIVF as of the same issue. The new prices are:

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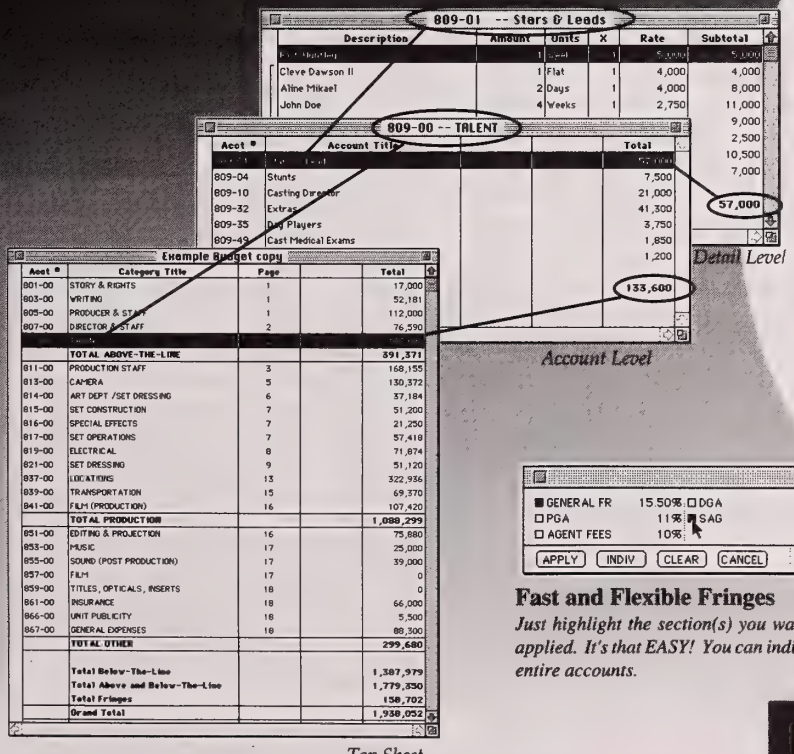
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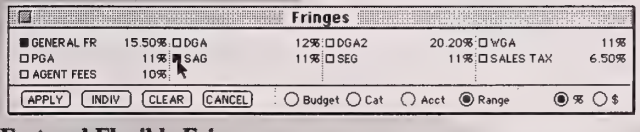
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Tracking NII

To the editor,

The Independent's ongoing coverage of information technology developments provides a critical service to independents everywhere. Manifold changes now underway will structure our media environment for the foreseeable future. Against this background, Gary Larson's article "In the Driver's Seat" [November 1994] both extends the writer's outstanding contributions to good citizenship in the electronic village and cogently summarizes the results of legislative (non)action through the past season.

However, lest readers fall into the paralysis of undue cynicism and despair, I hasten to add that the design of the National Information Infrastructure is still open to input from the public and nonprofit sectors. Larson's sober report should not be misinterpreted or taken as license to roll over in disillusioned apathy. Note that the two giant corporate merger hopefuls mentioned in the article, Bell Atlantic and TCI, have been continuously involved in making other new telecom deals ever since their joint approach fell apart. Independent producers and their allies cannot afford to remain silent in the public discourse on how to build the NII, and they should remember that speaking out does make a difference.

Important victories were recently scored by public interest advocates in two related areas. One involved the Department of Justice's decision to review its previous policy of seeming to support monopoly control over the publication of federal judicial decisions. The other was Government Printing Office's reversal of pricing policies that effectively prevented ordinary citizens from reading the legislative language of bills pending in Congress. In each of these instances, concerted efforts were successfully mounted by coalitions of concerned groups and individuals.

By the time readers receive this issue of *The Independent*, the Telecommunications Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) will have announced the recipients of the $26 million in grants from its pilot year of operation. The second round of grants, reportedly opening for applications this winter, will have a considerably larger pot of money. In these times of strident challenges to all forms of government funding, the TIIAP program will need all the support it can get.

For folks who are seriously busy, yet nonetheless need to learn about the salient issues in telecommunications (sound like anyone you know?), I recommend two excellent sources of information. Both of them chronicle relevant developments on the public service, legislative, regulatory, and government fronts. They are not directed specifically to independent producers, but they will supplement *The Independent*'s coverage nicely. Subscription information follows the descriptions.

The most immediate is the Technology Policy Roundtable (TPR) Internet Discussion List, provided by the Coalition for Networked Information. This electronic service (sometimes called a listserver) is available free of charge to anyone able to receive e-mail through the Internet. Several key organizations and individuals active in telecommunications developments regularly post brief news items, analyses, and formal and informal policy positions here (usually 4-10 items per day). For new readers, the TPR Discussion List quickly traces the outline of a public-interest community that is well-informed, diverse, and committed to participation in telecommunications policy development.

The Discussion List archives are available for electronic retrieval by anyone wishing to catch up on earlier postings. For those who were well-informed as of yesterday, the TPR discussion list is an efficient way to find out what's happened today. Sadly, the news and views commonplace here are difficult to find in mainstream media. An added bonus: it's generally lively, stimulating, and easy to read.

Perhaps the best print digest of news, background, interviews, and other telecom information for people interested in this evolutionary process is *infoActive*, a newsletter published by the Center for Media Education. Written in plain English and with material for both newcomers and the initiated, *infoActive* provides an engaging variety articles in each bi-monthly issue. Like the TPR listserver, *infoActive* will help readers to build their own resource lists for future reference.

Arthur Tsuchiya
Washington, DC

To subscribe to the Roundtable's Internet Discussion list, called "roundtable@cni.org", send an e-mail message addressed to "listproc@cni.org" with a one line message that says: "subscribe roundtable [your name]."

You can then send e-mail to roundtable@cni.org and, along with messages that others send to this address, it will be distributed to everyone who has subscribed.

To subscribe to *infoActive*, contact: The Center for Media Education, 1511 K Street, NW, Suite 518, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 628-2620, fax: (202) 628-2554; e-mail at cme@access.digex.net.

Letters continued on p. 5

FILM & VIDEO THE INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

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Letters to *The Independent* should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

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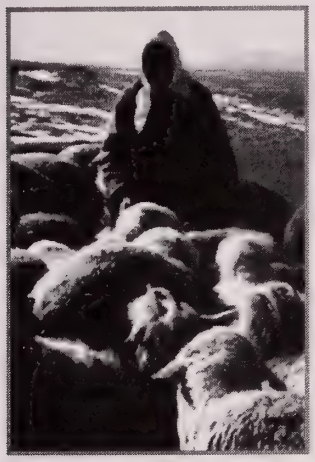
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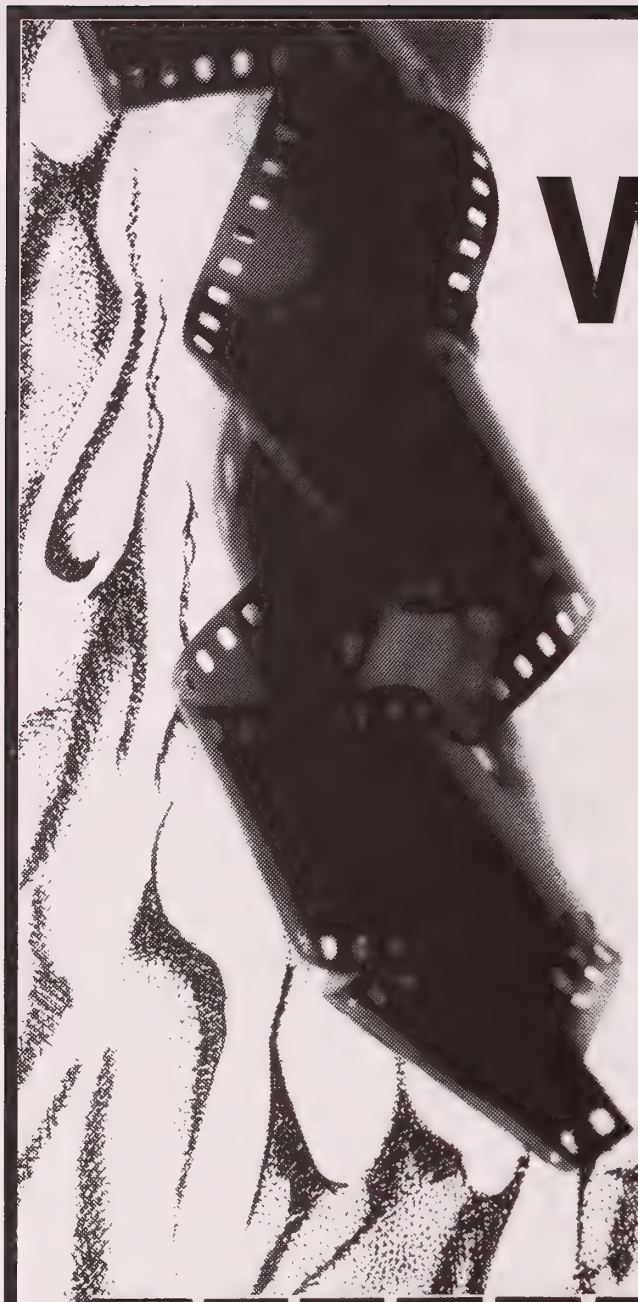


COVER: From Arlene Bowman's *Navajo Talking Picture*, one of six Native productions discussed by Beverly Singer in this month's feature section. Singer, Victor Masayesva, Jr., and Diane Reyna comment from a Native American perspective on indigenous aesthetics, community, and youth media training.

Also in this issue, Michele Shapiro looks at ITVS's production and marketing of its series, now beginning to come out of the gate.

Cover photo courtesy Arlene Bowman; top two photos on this page courtesy ITVS; additional photos on this page, beginning clockwise from lower left corner,: Photo: Trish Torkelson; © Latex Chipmunk Prod., courtesy Picture Start, Inc.; photo: Patricia Thomson.

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It's Academic

To the editor,

Patricia Zimmermann's article "Threading Cameras Isn't Enough" [August/September 1994] is both enlightening and true. Most students who come to film programs will quite naturally seek to imitate what they already know and call that success. Young actors also act mostly by imitation and impersonation. This is expected.

The other side of the coin is that students who leave schools that purport to teach mainstream practices find themselves learning the basics from the ground up once they enter the work force. This is not to say that film programs shouldn't bother to teach production, but it does point to the fact that the real power of the film programs is in the area of ideas.

Zimmermann writes of what I believe to be the key dialectic of a quality film program: theory and practice. Although an apparently simple concept, theory and practice actually becomes a challenging, exciting, and often life-changing experience. When students examine film, television, and their own productions with regard to issues of representation and gender, economics and politics, race and other cultural and social factors, they come face to face with many of the key questions of the day. When students in turn are challenged to consider this knowledge in their next production, they then begin a process that is healthy, difficult, and powerful.

Filmmaking is a tricky art because it is so technologically based and so capital dependent. But students are short-changed if they are taught that bigger-than-life special effects and big box-office receipts are the measure of quality filmmaking. Too often students are told that film is a powerful means of communication without ever being asked what they are communicating.

Tucker A. Teacgue
Eugene, Oregon

To the editor,

I read your Film Schools issue with great interest. As a graduate of one of the "big three" and director of a uniquely independent school of film, video, and photography, this issue was mandatory reading for me. Pittsburgh Filmmakers is a totally independent media arts center, but it teaches media (production and theory) for undergraduate credit to hundreds of students each term from five colleges and universities.

In reading Patricia Zimmermann's essay "Threading Cameras Isn't Enough," I was struck by one point. She mentions that the program at Ithaca, where she teaches, has abandoned filmmaking texts for their beginning classes because "the equipment these books meticulously describe never matches our own 16mm gear; second, these texts overemphasize technology and techniques beyond the reach of beginners; third they neutralize political and theoretical issues, turning them into fairly instrumental technical problems."

Last year, in an effort to address exactly these sorts of problems, my two colleagues, John Cantine and Susan Howard, and I wrote *Shot by Shot: A Practical Guide to Filmmaking*. Our primary goal was to create something that was truly aimed at beginners, a book that would introduce technical concepts without wallowing in them, a book that would be helpful to beginners rather than intimidate them with technical details that are not pertinent to the modest needs of most first films. Instead of trying to write a book that was exhaustive, we tried to create one that was extremely selective.

I am sure many of your readers are unaware of *Shot by Shot*'s existence. Pittsburgh Filmmakers is its publisher and distributor. Like most media arts centers, Filmmakers doesn't have the resources to mount a big advertising campaign or glossy catalog. The book has been advertised solely through three bulk mailings and word of mouth. Even so, it is being used in undergraduate classes at more than 50 schools throughout the United States and Canada.

Brady Lewis
Director of Education, Pittsburgh Filmmakers
Pittsburgh, PA

Errata

The contact information listed in the October 1994 issue for Picture Start, distributor of James Herbert's videos, was incorrect. Picture Start is reachable at: 1727 W. Catalpa Ave., Chicago, IL 60640; (312) 769-2489; fax: (312) 769-4467; e-mail: 74222.372@compuserve.com or Steph 20312@aol.com or Stofflet@delphi.com. We apologize for the error.

The contact information for Margaret Lazarus & Renner Wunderlich was omitted from their profile in the November issue. *Defending Our Lives* and their other films are available from: Cambridge Documentary Films, Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 354-3677; fax: (617) 492-7653.

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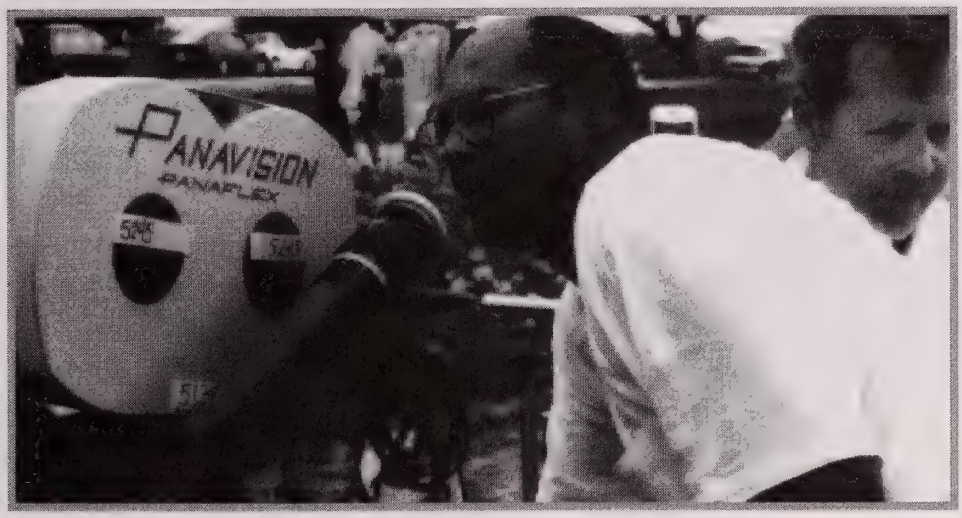
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RATERS OF THE LOST ART

Clerks' *and* Jason's Lyric's *NC-17 ratings raise the perennial question: Is the MPAA biased against independent films?*



Director Doug McHenry (*Jason's Lyric, above*) join the growing list of independents whose films have been slapped with an NC-17 rating. Courtesy PolyGram

THE MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (MPAA)'s decision this past fall to slap *Clerks* with an NC-17 rating—a move that could have hampered the film's theatrical release and video sales if its distributor had not appealed the decision and won—sets an unfortunate precedent. The feature, produced for a paltry $27,000 by first-time writer and director Kevin Smith, contains no graphic violence and no sex. The MPAA's anonymous Ratings Board objected not to brutal murders or heavy erotica but to the film's everyday foul language.

While the film's distributor, Miramax, has previously released NC-17 films, this is the second such rating the company has received since it was bought in May 1993 by Walt Disney Co., which refuses to release films with an NC-17 rating. This summer, Miramax's *The Advocate* received an NC-17 for a humorous sex scene. Prominent civil rights attorney William Kuntsler was brought on board to defend the film, and failed. The scene was cut, and it was released with an R rating.

Clerks' appeal took place on October 11, just 12 days before the film's release date. Fortunately for both Smith and Miramax, the distributor won the appeal and no editing changes were made to the film, which was released with an R rating. Still, those involved with the project were surprised that the Ratings Board came down so hard on *Clerks* in the first place.

"[The language in the film] isn't vulgarity for the sake of vulgarity," says Smith in an interview with *The Independent*. "This is natural dialogue and these are really sweet guys. [They're] not going to inspire people to go out there and shoot people or light homes on fire." Smith adds that he will not let *Clerks*' original NC-17 rating prompt self-censorship in his next film.

Meanwhile, David Dinerstein, head of marketing at Miramax, opposes the MPAA's reasoning. "It's ludicrous to censor a film like *Clerks* when there are far more 'dangerous'—to use the MPAA terminology—films out there for a child's welfare, such as *Natural Born Killers*," he says. In *Clerks*, an old kvetch dies off-screen with an erection, one 22-year-old rents hermaphrodite porno films, and another *talks* about a friend who died from a broken neck while trying to perform fellatio on himself.

"*Clerks* provides a comical look at two peoples' lives behind the counter of a convenience store," Dinerstein continues. "It's a movie that anyone who's had a shitty job, or a really bad relationship, or just wants to laugh [can relate to]."

Harvey and Bob Weinstein, the brothers who head up Miramax, hired high-profile attorney Alan Dershowitz to defend *Clerks* (although Dershowitz, hard at work on the O.J. Simpson trial, did not attend the appeal). The ratings battle is nothing new to Miramax, which in 1990 sued the Ratings Board when Pedro Almodóvar's *Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!* received an X rating. The court dismissed the case, but a new rating, NC-17, was born. In a recent *New York* magazine article, an unnamed source at Disney says, "When Miramax sued, they got a lot of publicity, which was good for the movie but terrible for the future ratings of their films."

In its *Clerks* appeal, the distributor compared the film to a scene from Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* (which received an R-rating) in which Juliette Lewis performs fellatio. "They're not showing the actual act," says Dinerstein, "but they're insinuating it within the scene, and you know what's going on. Why is it you can show but not talk about blow jobs? Why in a movie like *Short Cuts* can one of the characters give phone sex in a real evocative manner, yet again in *Clerks* you can't talk about it?"

Jack Valenti, head of the MPAA, stated in a recent *New York Times* article that "millions of Americans" might become "hysterical about the kind of language" featured in the film. He insists that the Ratings Board had to consider the "different standards" of viewers in Middle America, as opposed to major cities like Los Angeles or New York. Jeff Lipsky, cofounder of October Films, questioned Valenti's defense of the controversial decision, wondering, "Why is the anonymous Ratings Board, which is made up of people in Los Angeles, supposedly representative of parents all across America, when in fact the Appeals Board is made up of an entirely different group of people?"

Six members of the MPAA's 12-person Appeals Board belong to the National Association of Theater Owners, while the other six are entertainment industry executives. The MPAA has said that both boards are made up of members who are parents.

Paul Colichman, president of I.R.S. Media, an L.A.-based company that produces about 10 low-budget pictures a year, says the MPAA is "absolutely tougher on indies than on studios.... They look at independent films more closely; they're biased. Like any other viewers, they are influenced by star power. So when they see big stars in pictures, they tend to be easier on them than pictures that don't have big stars." Colichman says he wouldn't mind releasing a picture unrated but for the fact that "a lot of newspapers won't carry my ads if it's an unrated picture. If you can't advertise a film, it makes it very difficult."

While October's Lipsky says he doesn't believe the Ratings Board is intentionally tougher on independent films, he is highly critical of the MPAA's system. "I think there are hornets' nests of heinous inequities and problems inherent in the MPAA's Code and Rating Administration. I do not necessarily buy into this discrimination against independents. If that were the case, then *Pulp*



Kevin Smith (*Clerks*) Courtesy Miramax

Fiction, which contains some of the most ugly, mind-twisted violence in the history of motion pictures, would be rated NC-17." He points out it's being released by the same distributor—"that distributor being the dependent distributor Miramax, a division of the Walt Disney Company."

Lipsky adds that indies are sometimes targets because, without the backing of high-powered distributors like Miramax, they are less likely to stand up to the appeal process. "They can't afford to wear down the Appeals Board, and they can't afford to recut the negative time after time and create another print time after time after time. There is economic discrimination at work."

The Ratings Board is routinely more squeamish about sex and graphic language than about violence. In the case of *Jason's Lyric*, another recent film that was rated NC-17 before its makers excised a few seconds of nudity and softened its advertising poster, the board asked for no changes in the film's depiction of ghetto violence. Doug McHenry, who directed *Jason's Lyric*, denounced the original NC-17 rating (later changed to an R) as "racist" because sex in the film is between two black individuals. "If you have two black people making love, somehow," he told the *New York Times*, "that's steamier than other people." *Lyric*'s distributor, Gramercy Pictures, was unavailable for comment.

All those interviewed concur that it's high time for the MPAA to overhaul and modernize its Ratings and Appeals Boards. Says Lipsky, "The ratings system was created as a guide for parents only. They've never come up with another explanation for why this system exists."

JORDAN ELGRABLY

Jordan Elgrably is a novelist and independent filmmaker living in Los Angeles.

Programming with an Edge

Edge Television, the new cable showcase for short films, is in the market for avant-garde, experimental, and animated shorts, as well as independent features that exhibit "a signature vision." The daily 10-hour programming block will launch as part of the 24-hour Applause Network next November. The network, which pays a percentage of the licensing fee up front with the remainder due upon first broadcast, has been signing licensing agreements with independent filmmakers since last May.

Through a carriage agreement with TCI, the nation's largest cable operator, Applause will become one of the first five digital networks available to the public. Being offered as a "mini-pay" service, the network will be available first in a few major cities, then gradually spread out nationally. The company hopes to be available in New York and Los Angeles by the end of 1996.

"We consider ourselves a programming service," says Nan Helm, director of programming and development for Edge. "We're putting together programming and getting it out through whatever technology is available, not limited to cable outlets." Edge is also looking into direct satellite broadcast for the European market.

The early evening program on Edge, which will air from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., will be a short-form showcase; late evening will present an independent feature; and the overnight section of innovative and underground work, possibly including a second feature. "We like shorts," says Helm, "because they give us more mobility in programming. We want Edge to have a different feel than conventional television, and the short form gives us the liberty to present five different voices in a given hour. It also puts us in touch with work that



Cutting edge shorts, such as Mary Hestand's *He Was Once*, are cur
Courtesy Zeitgeist Films

is more experimental in nature. And there is a wealth of material out there that has never had an outlet on television."

In September, Edge was a major presence at the Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM) in Manhattan, sponsoring the Short Film Section and manning a highly visible booth (complete with sofa) in the Angelika Film Center Café. "We were in touch with almost all the short-film makers at the market," says Helm. "We also networked a great deal with production companies, distributors, and other networks. We were surprised to hear from many of these people that they see a lot of material that they like but can't program, and happily referred it to us. So we came away from the market with the feeling that we are definitely filling a niche in American broadcasting."

The company is busy securing output agreements with distributors of short films and non-

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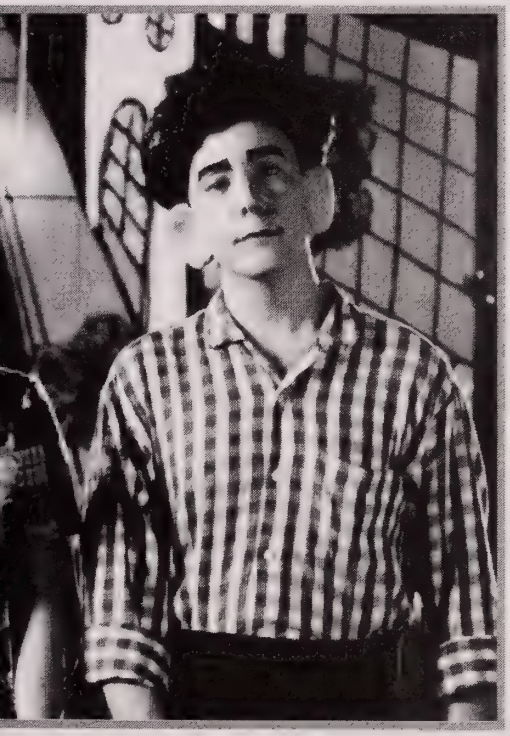
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mainstream independent features. A recent agreement with Chicago-based Picture Start, one of the nation's largest distributors of short films with a library of more than 2,000 titles, guarantees the distributor that Edge will buy a certain number of hours of programming each month. In exchange, Edge will either do a Picture Start Showcase or cross promotion with their video library. Ultimately, Edge hopes to enter into a joint venture with Picture Start for a home video line. They are discussing similar purchase agreements with Manhattan-based Coe Films, which possesses a short film library in the area of 5,000 titles; InPictures, a producer's representative handling short films; and Zeitgeist Films, distributor of the



acquired by the new programming service Edge TV.

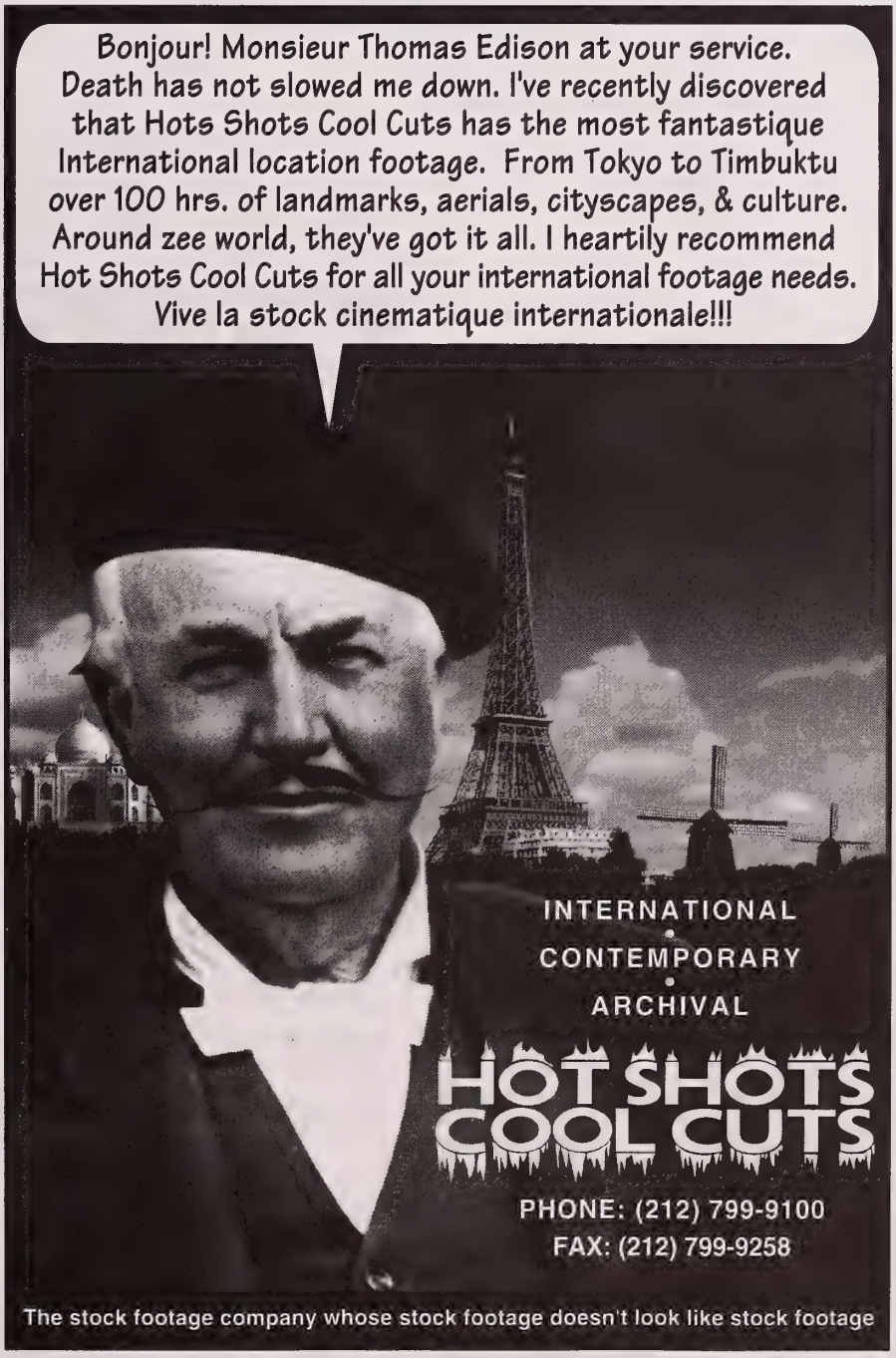
Apparatus collection.

Being at IFFM also emphasized the wealth of unprogrammed material available in the feature format, says Helm. "We are looking at features that take more of a risk than other independent work—stylistically and with content," she comments. "As a result of the IFFM, we will probably be moving into the feature arena a little more quickly than we thought."

Original programming, however, will have to wait. "Until we launch, our agenda will be to concentrate on acquisition of completed programs," says Helm. "But we did have some very interesting ideas for original programming pitched to us at the market. So we're keeping a file on them.

"The only original production we will be doing before launch is filmmaker profiles. We really want to put a face to filmmakers—emerging filmmakers, experimental filmmakers, as well as well-known

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directors who have made short films."

Among the short works acquired to date are Kenneth Anger's 1949 classic *Puce Moment*, an Apparatus film *He Was Once* by Mary Hestand, Tony Vegas' *Le Beatnik Sophistique*, Emily Hubley's *Enough*, Paul Garrin's *Reverse Big Brother*, Tony Cokes' *Fade To Black*, and Eric Saks' *You Talk, I Buy*. The company is currently in negotiations on several Sadie Benning titles and is interested in a number of titles from the IFFM, including Pooh Kaye's *The Painted Princess* and Ryc Montgomery's *The Beast*.

The Applause Network, broadcasting in the daytime, will be dedicated to 1950s celebrity-driven television classics featuring stars such as Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, and Angela Lansbury. For the past 10 years, Applause has been acquiring libraries of fifties TV material. They now have about 4,000 hours of programming in place.

"We feel there can be a bridge between the two," says Helm. "Edge will appeal to the younger demographic of 18 to 39 year olds. But we're finding that that group really likes fifties TV as well. The new technologies are providing opportunities for different types of programming not possible before. Maybe later we will branch into two separate networks."

JENNINE LANOUETTE

Jennine Lanouette is a Manhattan-based freelance writer and story consultant.

Time Warner Establishes Media Lab at NYU

In 1971, New York University's then-fledgling Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP) was used by students to study the cutting-edge technology of the day: small format video and cable technologies. Today, with a $500,000 gift from Time Warner, Inc., the greatly expanded Tisch School of the Arts graduate program is establishing a media laboratory focused on exploring the latest in digital technology.

"This is just a natural evolution in looking at how people use tools," says Professor Red Burns, chair of the program. Burns has invested time and belief in ITP since its inception, when "interactive" sounded more at home in an episode of *Star Trek* than on the minds of today's consumers

Time Warner, Inc. is giving $50,000 annually over the course of 10 years to help NYU establish a media laboratory devoted to turning digital dreams into more than virtual reality, according to Mary Schmidt Campbell, dean of the Tisch School. In recognition of Time Warner's generosity, the laboratory will bear the company's name, but Campbell stresses the gift by no means signals a "quid-pro-quo" arrangement between the mega-corporation and mega-university.

However, Campbell does plan on inviting corporations to stop by and see ITP projects, and she

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is confident that the Time Warner Media Lab will be "a kind of Bell Laboratories" of ideas. Projects abound at ITP where they've created: a CD-ROM for HarperCollins Reference; an interactive kiosk at a coffee bar; and an "Electronic Neighborhood" on Manhattan Cable where viewers can control their viewing, via the telephone, courtesy of a blend of technologies.

The new digital laboratory is currently housed on the fourth floor of the Tisch building in Manhattan, nestled in the arms of ITP. The program has so far purchased one digital video editing system with the gift and has two more systems on order.

"We see the gift as allowing us the capacity to acquire more sophisticated technology than we might otherwise be able to afford in our regular equipment budget," Burns says. "Each year, we will be able to order whatever the state of the art technology is."

Part of the challenge raised by establishing digital lab technology is the equipment burnout rate, which is nothing less than intense. "The wear and tear is tremendous," Burns says. "Two years for each unit is about what we figure, since the computers will be used all the time."

So, the hunt is always on to find contributors willing to pitch in with ITP on its ever-evolving expansion, says Campbell, who adds that, in addition to Time Warner, Inc., corporations such as NYNEX have pitched in with cash contributions for past projects and expansions. "All of a sudden, it seems like digital technology has reached a threshold point, that it's in central focus now, and that's very exciting," Campbell says. "The shift from analog to digital will be a critical issue for the school in upcoming years."

This is doubly true, since interactive digital technology poses a special challenge when it comes to sharing the equipment interdepartmentally. "The equipment is used with such frequency that each department has the need for it all," says Burns.

The lab will be put to immediate use by ITP students, who come from a variety of disciplines, such as business, architecture, fine arts, writing, animation, and graphics. In fact, the variety of student interests coming together is what makes the lab and the entire program, unique in its creators' eyes.

"The whole idea (behind ITP) is that the people are not computer scientists, but rather artists—and I use that in the broadest sense (of the word)—who come to these technologies and begin to create new things," says Burns. "The whole purpose here is to demystify the technology, so that people can contribute to the ways a form develops."

KATE BOBBY

Kate Bobby works as a writer for the North Jersey Newspaper Co., Inc. and freelances for a variety of publications in the New York metropolitan area.

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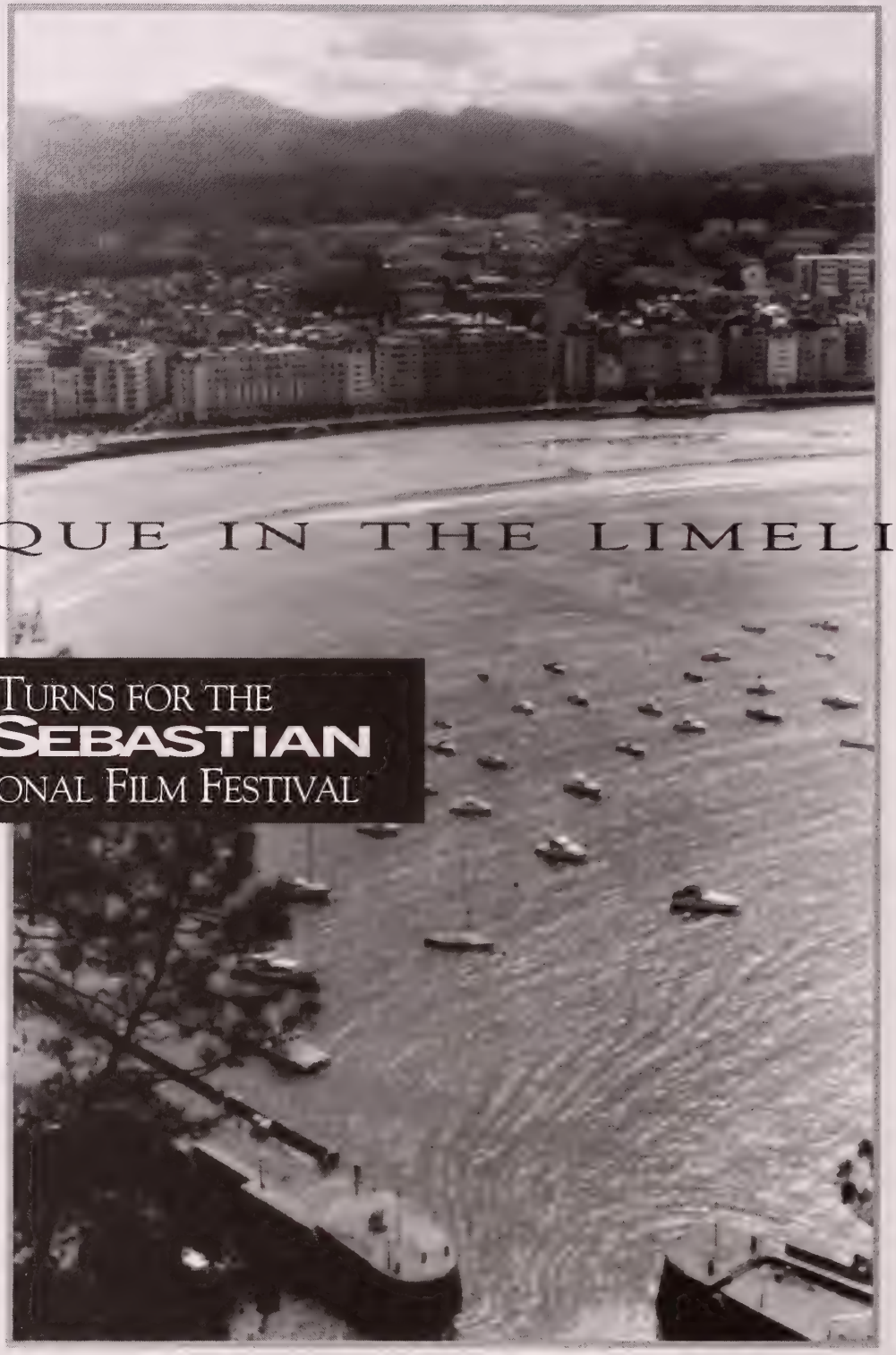
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By Patricia Thomson



Once the seaside retreat of Spanish royalty, now San Sebastian plays host to the country's oldest and biggest film festival.
Photo: Patricia Thomson

BASQUE IN THE LIMELIGHT

The Tide Turns for the San Sebastian International Film Festival

A crowd of young Basque separatists surges toward us like an incoming tide channeled through the narrow streets of San Sebastian's old quarter. From around the corner comes the popping sound of explosives—the smoke bombs of riot police, who move slowly down the café-lined boulevard, targets of an occasional hurled stone.

"This happens every week," a local resident lackadaisically explains later that evening in one of San Sebastian's ubiquitous tapas bars. "Especially during the festival—for publicity."

But the demonstration creates barely a ripple at the San Sebastian International Film Festival (known in Basque as the Donostiako Nazioarteko Zinemaldia), headquartered a few blocks away and a world apart in the opulent Maria Christina hotel, built in 1912 as Queen María Christina's seaside retreat.

In recent years, the festival has suffered far greater disturbances as a result of its own internal politics. It went through three directors in the years between 1989 and 1991 and was bludgeoned by critics for its identity crisis and lackluster line-up. For decades San Sebastian had been a glamorous European launching pad for Hollywood product, well attended by stars and paparazzi. Now this 42-year-old festival must compete for international premieres, wedged as it is between the major fall festivals: Venice, Toronto, Montreal, and Tokyo. The net result is an Official Competition slate that has increasingly ranged from hum-drum to hum-dinger. Things got so bad in 1990 that the all-director jury refused to award the top prize to any film, relenting only when forced by festival authorities.

But the tide appears to have turned. In 1993 the reins were taken over by Manuel (Manolo) Pérez Estremera, a well liked and highly regarded cinéaste with a long track record at Spanish state TV channel RTVE, most recently as head of Latin American coproductions. His influential

second-in-command is former *El Pais* film critic Diego Galán, who had worked for the festival from 1985 to 1989. Their second edition of the festival drew praises and sighs of relief from once curmudgeonly critics.

"World cinema just doesn't produce the 180 annual masterpieces that would be necessary for the Official Sections of all major festivals," Pérez Estremera plainly acknowledged at the end of his first year at the helm. And so, he and Galán wisely broadened the festival, beefing up the sidebars and in the process deemphasizing the Official Competition (which did, however, contain some strong contenders this year, including He Ping's *Red Firecracker, Green Firecracker* from China and two from Spain: *Todo es mentira* by Alvaro Fernandez Armero and *Días contados*, the festival's top prize winner, by Imanol Uribe).

But it was the informational Open Zone (Zabaltegi) section that was most lauded by critics, offering some of the festival's strongest work: Krzysztof Kieslowski's entire *Blue*, *White*, and *Red* trilogy was here, as was Zhang Yimou's epic *To Live* and the intriguing Mossad spy thriller *Les Patriotes*, by Frenchman Eric Rochant. There was *The Silences of the Palace*, a fine debut feature by Tunisian director Moufida Tlatli, which offers a richly detailed look inside the royal palace of the Bey from the perspective of a servant's daughter on the cusp of sexual and political awakening. And there was the tough *Once Were Warriors*, by New Zealander Lee Tamahori, with its stellar performance by Rena Owen as a Maori mother trying to hold her family and wits together in the face of a brutal husband and spirit-sapping urban environment.

Equally important was the new Made in Spanish section, which significantly boosts the vital role San Sebastian plays in parlaying films into the Spanish-language market. Comprising 22 films from Spain and Latin America, this sidebar showcased works by old masters like Cuba's Tomás Gutiérrea Alea (*Fresa y Chocolate*) and Mexico's Arturo Ripstein (*La Mujer del Puerto*) as well as younger upstarts, like Mexico's Carolos Carrera (*La Vida Conyugal*), and Chile's Gonzala Justiniano (*Amnesia*) and Gustavo Graef Marino (*Johnny 100 Pesos*).

Knowing what it takes to attract international press, Pérez Estremera and Galán have tried to maintain some of San Sebastian's old-style glamour. Lana Turner was brought in for the special Donostia Prize, and William Hurt, Mickey Rooney, Greta Scacchi, Terence Stamp, and Oliver Stone were among the glitterati seen treading the red carpet in front of the grandiose Victoria Eugenio Theater. As always, the festival included a number of Hollywood films, including *The Shadow* and *Clear and Present Danger*.

At the same time, Pérez Estremera and Galán have introduced the word "risk" into their favored lexicon. This bodes well for U.S. independents, who were in fact well represented this year. Two made it into the Official Competition: *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*, a debut feature by actress Jennifer Warren, and *Scenes from the New World*, by Gordon Eriksen and Heather Johnson, co-directors of the 1989 low-budget feature *The Big Dis*. The Open Zone included seven U.S. independents out of 36 features: *...And the Earth Did Not Swallow Him*; *Clerks*; *Hoop Dreams*; *Killing Zoe*; *Pulp Fiction*; *El silencio de Neto*; and *Spanking the Monkey*. Plus, a retrospective was devoted to director/screenwriter John Sayles, capped off by his new Irish children's tale, *The Secret of Roan Inish*.

IF ONE JUDGES A FESTIVAL BY ITS LOCATION, THEN San Sebastian ranks among the top. Located on the northern coast of Spain just 12 miles from the French border, San Sebastian is a fishing village turned high-class holiday resort, made fashionable after Queen Isabella II vacationed here in 1845. The city is characterized by its elegant Belle Epoque architecture, which wraps around a gorgeous blue bay and shell-white beach. Located at the base of the rugged Pyrenées, this land is home of *jai alai* and world class bike racers and birthplace of the sophisticated new Basque cuisine. Decent Rioja is served for about 35 cents a shot at the tapas bars, and the cafe con leche puts America's new coffee bars to shame.

If one judges a festival by its prizes, then San Sebastian gets the blue ribbon. It offers the biggest cash prize on the international festival circuit: the Euskal Media prize of ecu 300,000 (about $370,000) goes to the best first or second feature film presented in the Competition or Open Zone. (To qualify, films cannot have previously received a major festival award.) The fact that 21 of the 56 films in these two sections—about 40 percent—were in the running (including six by U.S. independents) says a great deal about the festival's commitment to risk. The prize money, which comes from the Basque government, goes to the director and producer for their next project, or is split between them if they go their separate ways. The only strings attached are that the project be started within two years, that it involve a Spanish coproducer ("The presence of the Spanish coproducer is just bureaucratic," says Galán), and, as a courtesy more than a requirement, that the new film be shown at a future edition of San Sebastian.

Since this is only the second year the Euskal Media prize has been so large, the first beneficiary of this prize pot, Ning Ying (for *Looking For Fun*, an engaging film about retirees setting

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up, then feuding over an amateur Peking Opera club) is still in production in China. This year the prize went to Irish filmmaker Paddy Breathnach for *Ailsa*, a moody tale of loneliness and obsessive love.

If a festival is judged by its opportunities for business, then San Sebastian is second tier. The festival recently discontinued its market, substituting a modest sales office where buyers can screen videos of festival entries and get help contacting filmmakers. And while the festival treats directors quite well in some respects—holding a press conference and evening reception for competition films; providing directors with a package of all available press coverage of their films; organizing mid-afternoon, informal meet-the-filmmaker salons at a local bar—directors are left largely to their own devices to track down buyers.

If a filmmaker happens to be aiming for the Spanish-language market, however, San Sebastian is a great entry point. A fair number of programmers, buyers, and festival directors from Spain and Latin America attend the festival and have informal contact with Pérez Estremera and Galán during course of the year. Luis Argueta, a Guatemalan now living in New York City, met festival programmers from Chicago, Puerto Rico, Melbourne, and Colombia while promoting his festival entry, *El Silencio de Nedo*, a coming-of-age tale of a middle-class Guatemalan boy, set in 1954 against the backdrop of the CIA-backed coup d'état. "The Cartagena festival [in Colombia] is very important; one of the things they are promoting is a new market section for South America," says Argueta, who was invited there after one of his screenings. "I also got a call yesterday from a gentleman in France, Raphael Gozalbo, who is in charge of promoting French-Latin American TV coproductions for the Biarritz Festival of Spanish and Latin American films," held immediately after San Sebastian. "So [San Sebastian] is a door to possible South American coproduction," Argueta says. Nonetheless, "I was surprised I never got a list of buyers. But the whole idea of film as an industry is something that San Sebastian is not set up for. Here film as an art is a stronger concept. That's wonderful, but at the same time we need the other side."

Meanwhile, Pepe Vargas, director of Chicago's International Latin American Film Festival, was making headway with the festival's roster of Spanish and Latin American films, a remarkably strong line-up, particularly in light of the decline in production in South America. (This is due in no small part to the shrinking budget of Spanish TV, which previously had been an important funder of Latin American coproductions.) "I expect to select 10 to 12 films," said Vargas, whose list midway through the festival included three Spanish features: *Alegre ma non troppo*, *Todo es mentira*, and *Días contados*. There to raise the visibility of his own festival (Vargas delivered festival catalogs and notes to numerous directors and festival programmers), he was also repeatedly heading over to the Made in Spanish sidebar. Since these films have already gone through the expense of adding English subtitles (unlike all the other sections), some of these works might eventually show up in U.S. art theaters, as well as at festivals like Chicago's.



The San Sebastian film festival opens doors to the Latin American market, "but indirectly," says Luiz Argueta, director of *El Silencio de Nedo*, a coming of age story set in Guatemala during the CIA-backed coup d'état. Courtesy filmmaker

Conversely, U.S. Latino filmmaking was barely visible at San Sebastian. Other than *El Silencio de Nedo*, Argueta's U.S.-Guatemalan coproduction (and the first native feature shot in Guatemala), there was one Chicano film, Severo Pérez's English-language production *...And the Earth Did Not Swallow Him*, an American Playhouse-backed film about migrant workers in the 1930s based on a book by Tomás Rivera. (Last year, on the other hand, the festival devoted a sidebar to Chicano film, which resulted in "much curiosity" and a number of sales to Spanish TV, reports Galán.) Vargas suspects this is simply a reflection of the scarcity of dramatic features by Latinos. Last year his festival included only three entries from this country.

"That just shows we're beginning to get into positions where we're able to [produce features]," says Argueta, who is cautiously optimistic about the future of Latino filmmaking in the U.S. "There are people who are beacons in the industry, like Edward Olmos. Andy Garcia is now trying to do a film," he says. "You will see more films, but—fortunately or unfortunately—they will be in English, trying to reach a larger audience." For Latino independents, the good news is often bundled with the bad. For instance, while a major company like HBO has recently added a new Tropics division aimed at the Hispanic television market, "They pay so little," Argueta sighs, "$10,000 for a film in Spanish." Even so, he counters, "A case like *Like Water for Chocolate*



Director Jennifer Warren with Rutger Hauer on location for *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*, one U.S. independent films in the Official Competition. Courtesy IRS Releasing

or *Belle Epoque*—that got a lot of people thinking there *is* a market; people will go see a Spanish-language film. I think that this influx of Spanish and Mexican films into the U.S. is an encouraging sign for independent filmmakers."

For the most part, however, Pérez Estremera and Galán are not particularly on the lookout for Latino material. Rather, they're simply interested in all "new work that involves risk... [and] is not already distributed by big companies," says Galán. The festival employs 10 international delegates who scout for films, including two in the U.S.: Bérénice Reynaud in Los Angeles and Sandy Mandleberger in New York City. "Delegates do not make preselections, unless they see something really awful," Galán explains. "They give us information about what's going on in independent movies, and they send copies or facilitate screenings." This year Pérez Estremera flew to New York City in the summer to screen about 60 films.



Rena Owen as the Maori wife and mother struggling to keep her wits and family together in Lee Tamahori's powerful *Once Were Warriors*. Courtesy filmmaker

Of the U.S. entries selected, over half are now in theaters or on the festival circuit, including *Hoop Dreams*, *Clerks*, *Spanking the Monkey*, and *Eat, Drink, Man, Woman* (officially a Taiwanese entry). There was also the current killer trio—*Pulp Fiction*, *Killing Zoe*, and *Natural Born Killers*—which proved enormously popular among Spaniards. Quentin Tarantino was the toast of the festival, attracting as much attention as Lana Turner and Kieslowski. And Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers* drew a crowd of 3,000 to a special screening in the city's Velodrome.

The Competition films by U.S. independents met a far cooler reception. The chill was reflected in the local newspaper *El Diario Vasco*, which tracked Spanish critics' ratings on a 5-point scale: *Scenes from a New World*, a film about a multicultural household in Queens which had its world premiere at the festival, ranked a low 0.4 (compared to the top score of 3.6 for *Red Firecracker*). *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*, which had just won a third place in the audience awards at the Seattle Film Festival, here received a lukewarm 1.6.

The Beans, however, had the distinction of holding what was perhaps the longest (two hour) and feistiest press conference, thanks in part of director Jennifer Warren's willingness to raise the issue of women directors' invisibility at the festival. Only nine of the 88 films in the sections showcasing new work—the competition, Open Zone, Made in Spanish, and Critics' Choice—were directed by women. "I guess I got a little crusty when then asked me how would a woman prevail, working with stars," she recalls with a grin, noting, "To be a director, you don't need upper body strength."

The American Playhouse-backed *Beans of Egypt, Maine*, based on Carolyn Chute's eponymous book, depicts the entangled lives of two families in the back woods of Maine—rural poor who have fallen through the safety net. It's about "all these women who endure, and all these men who can't bear it," says Warren. Despite the film's complex and compassionate portrayal of its characters, one critic responded that all the male characters seemed "retarded," provoking Rutger Hauer to respond, "Perhaps it is you who are retarded." (Hauer insisted the interpreter translate his remark.) "It got people talking," quips Warren, who took it all in stride and came away with a positive opinion of the festival. "I'm really impressed with San Sebastian," she enthuses. "Obviously it's organized by people who love film and filmmakers and are trying to get filmmakers together. I think it's wonderfully done."

Killing Zoe director Roger Avary seconds Warren's comment. "The people who run this festival are so nice and so cool. San Sebastian is absolutely gorgeous. And it's an opportunity to win a prize." Running a festival this big "is an organizational nightmare," Avary continues, "worse than the space shuttle, worse than making a film! I'm impressed it even runs."

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.

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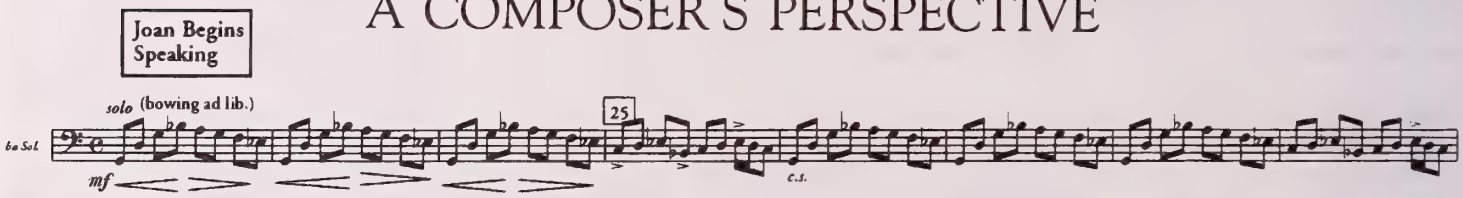
WYBE TV 35

By Richard Einhorn

SOUND IDEAS

How Music Gets Written for Film

The Collaborative Process from a Composer's Perspective



Music refines and enhances the emotional resonances of a film. It brings out subtleties that barely existed before, imbuing the shutting of an eye with tenderness and love or the sudden appearance of a hand with profound terror.

I always find the task of composing for film a thrilling experience, not only due to the pleasure experienced while working on exciting projects, but also because collaborating with filmmakers enables me to learn more about the vastly different approaches in creating aural and visual art. The following is a brief sketch of how a film gets scored, focusing on the creative interplay between composers and filmmakers.

Typically, the composer begins work after a film is shot. The most intense period of composition happens in the last few weeks of postproduction just as the film achieves its final edit and everyone prepares to mix the dialogue, music, and sound. On a feature film, which usually has about 55 to 70 minutes of music, a composer might have about four to six weeks to complete a score.

Like many composers, I prefer to be involved at the earliest possible stage—much sooner, in fact, than the above timetable indicates. This enables me to do some basic research, soak up some of the film's atmosphere, and get a feeling for the emotional themes that are important to the director. Perhaps the furthest I've ever taken this was in composing an opera/oratorio to accompany Carl Dreyer's great silent film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. This was a massive project including a live orchestra, chorus, and soloists. I spent many months researching the film, Joan of Arc, and medieval religious practices, even travelling to France to visit Joan's home town. This background work, impossible to accomplish in the normal timeframe allotted for a typical film score, was indispensable in shaping my approach.



From *The Passion of Joan of Arc* Score and cue sheet courtesy Richard Einhorn

Part 1: The Entrapment 5'45"
(Pater Noster: dark, ominous)
Begins as Loisleur reacts to entrance of the judges to Joan's cell 00:21:05:08
Joan "hears" her answer 00:26:05:04
Ends as Cauchon rises after Joan's Great Response 00:26:50:00

TEXT: see PATER NOSTER TEXTS ARRANGED

PATER NOSTER TEXTS ARRANGED

Instruments: Strings, tenor, alto, viola da gamba

Choosing a Composer

A composer is chosen for a film based on many criteria, the most important being reputation, appropriateness for the project, knowledge of the craft, and (very crucial) personal rapport with the filmmaker.

Filmmakers usually become acquainted with a composer's work and reputation either from previous films the composer has scored, word of mouth, recordings, or an agency. For filmmak-

ers who live outside of New York or Los Angeles, good local composers are usually found exclusively through word of mouth.

Filmmakers should first ask the composer to submit a demo tape of previous work. Although a demo provides a very good idea of how competent the composer is at producing and recording, its most important function is to enthrall the filmmaker. If it doesn't, consider another composer. Demos may be misleading, however. Since all films are unique, a composer's previous work may not match exactly what a director or producer has in mind. The best filmmakers understand this and look for some other quality in the music.

If the filmmaker likes the composer's work, a meeting is arranged. This usually takes place after the composer has read the script but before the initial screening. This is a "get-to-know-you" meeting, at which time very general questions are asked. Filmmakers will want to know: Does the composer like the script? Does he or she connect with the characters on some level? Do the scenes stimulate the composer's imagination? What general ideas for music does the composer have? Do they jibe or conflict with the perspective of the filmmaker? How articulate is the composer at expressing musical ideas in layman's terms? And, perhaps most importantly, how well does the composer handle the always tricky task of collaborating with other equally committed artists under extreme pressure?

The composer, in turn, will need to get a sense from the director of what the overall musical approach to the film might be. Should the music be large, sweeping, and dramatic? Or will it be intimate and light? Is it mostly composing music for dialogue? Are there any montages for film and music, without dialogue? In addition, the composer will need some basic logistical information: most importantly the schedule for rough and fine cut completion and the overall music production budget.

Once the composer is chosen, a contract is negotiated and signed between the film company and the composer. Most, but not all, contracts for lower budget and independent films are package deals; the composer is given a sum of money, and the filmmaker expects a finished tape of the music in return. In package deals, the composer keeps whatever money is left over from the music production costs. On larger films, however, the composer is hired for a set fee and the production company manages the music production budget. For either type of arrangement, I involve my lawyer at the earliest possible negotiation stage, usually immediately after I am hired. That way I can work undistracted on the score while the complexities of the contract (in addition to fees, there are copyright and credit issues to discuss) are worked out to everyone's satisfaction.

Spotting the Film

The composer's skill at collaborating is immediately called into service as soon as he or she is hired, because the very next step is the "spotting session." This is the time when the director, editor, and composer (and sometimes the producers) get together to screen the film and toss around ideas about where the music should go and what it should sound like.

The spotting session usually occurs when the film is in rough-cut. Since this is the composer's first exposure to the work, the session is best conducted in a screening room, where the film has the most impact. On features and sometimes documentaries, the filmmaker may have laid in pre-existing music against the picture to give a sense of what might be called for in a given scene. Often the composer's own music, written for other projects, is used for this "temp" score. Most composers prefer not to hear temp music very often, as it tends to be confusing during the development of an original approach toward a film.

Soon after this first screening, everyone meets to try to pin down what the music should do. Where do we want it? Should the music be dark? Cheerful? Light? Should it counterpoint the picture? Does this character need a theme? Where should we not have music?

Spotting sessions are usually very long, but invariably enjoyable. Everyone gets to know each other, and often ideas for the musical approach emerge that no one had anticipated.

Composition/Recording

Immediately after the spotting session, the composer returns to her or his studio and begins sketching out themes for the film. These early sketches are often very short—under a minute—and are composed simply to evoke moods and give the director a sense of what the music might eventually sound like.

Even those of us who write primarily instrumental music will sketch on computer. In my studio, a fairly large one, there are 13 synthesizers and samplers (devices that play back realistic recordings of instruments), a huge Macintosh–based music system, and enough additional outboard gear to outfit a space shuttle. The reason is simple: computer demos of the final score enable filmmakers to gain a precise sense at a very early stage of what the music will sound like. Computer demos can also save money, as studios and live musicians are expensive, and it is much cheaper to revise the music by computer before the musicians arrive at the studio.

When the film is locked, another spotting

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session is usually held to pin down the final timings and overall ideas for the score. The composer returns to the studio and begins refining the sketched themes into precise music "cues" or music segments that sync with the picture. These are then sent to the editing room (in synthesizer demo form) to be synched up with the picture and evaluated by the director.

At this stage, music demos get pretty elaborate. Sometimes, to the composer's dismay, the filmmakers prefer the synth demos to the final tapes, and they wind up being used in the picture, mistakes and all.

Once all the music has been composed and demos approved, a studio specializing in film or video scoring is booked for the recording of live instruments. Since most film music today uses a combination of live and synthesized sound, tracks derived from the synthesizer demos are often mixed in with the live instrumentalists. When done well, the result is an effective blend of familiar and unusual sounds.

After the music is recorded and mixed down to the desired format (usually two to six discrete tracks), the finished tapes are sent over to the editing room where the score is synchronized with the picture. When there is no music editor, I try to sit in at this stage to help out with the last minute changes that invariably crop up.

The Film Dub

At the film dub (or "mix" as it is called on the East Coast), all the sounds in the picture—the dialogue, music, and effects—are balanced against each other. Occasionally, the composer has the unpleasant experience of listening to his music being drowned out by a loud sound effect, such as a jet engine. On the other hand, occasionally the director feels the music is so strong and right that all other sounds are removed (the battle scenes in Kurosawa's *Ran*, for example).

I try to go to as many dubs as I can, partly as an advocate for the music, but also so I can learn more about how filmmakers make their decisions about music and sound.

There's a more compelling reason to be there, however. It's that moment when, for the first time, the music is balanced with the picture and suddenly the scene comes alive with an emotional power that none of us, no matter how experienced, can fully anticipate. That heartstopping moment is the real point to attending the dub. It's one of the main reasons I love to compose for film.

Richard Einhorn has composed music for 13 features, including Arthur Penn's Dead of Winter *and Radha Bharadwaj's* Closet Land. *He has also scored over 80 documentaries, including Academy Award nominee* Wild by Law *by Florentine Films and the Oscar-winning* Educating Peter *by Geraldine Wurzburg.*

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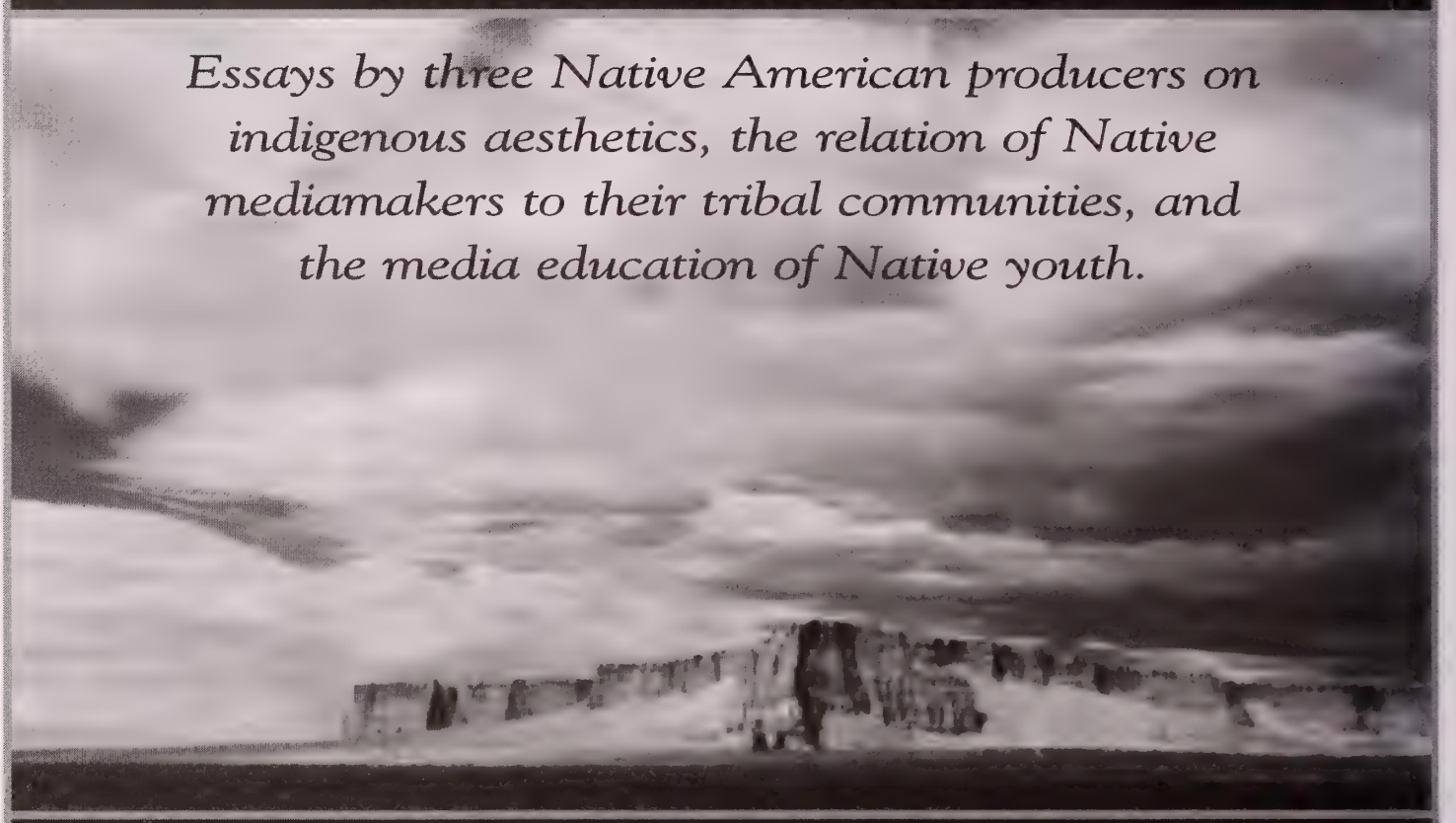
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THE EMERGING NATIVE AMERICAN AESTHETIC

By Victor Masayesva



THE RECENT CROP OF COMMERCIAL FILMS AND TELEVISION PROGRAMS ON INDIANS PURPORTEDLY FROM A NATIVE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE IS A HALF-LIE. The half-truth comes from Indians employed in responsible positions, along with the usual Indian consultants. But *Dances with Wolves*, *Geronimo*, the upcoming film *Pocahantas*, and the documentary series executive produced by Kevin Costner and Ted Turner were, in essence, produced by and for Whitemen. How could such media goodwill produce such ill will from native communities? An answer starts with the recognition that it's not so far removed from the U.S. Government offering to manage our lands and natural resources.

If film is about imagined time and space, it is borne from the imagination of people each of whom have constructed those times and spaces differently. Space, as determined on this continent by indigenous peoples, is defined by cliff dwellings, teepees, longhouses, mountain passes, river crossings, great plains, and dry plateaus, and time by the movement of seasons through these spaces. I have seen many white people who are uncomfortable in our public plazas, uneasy in unfamiliar spaces, whereas I am familiar with the now empty narrow passages of ancient ruins where I might pass a young girl going for water, or where a mother might be preparing food. Certainly I feel the power of sacred spaces of ancient kivas at the ruins of Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, Betatakin, and certainly our ancestral ruin Kawestima (Keet Seel). Then why are we continually left out of the recreation of these spaces and times on film?

Indigenous people around the globe are indignant about having to compromise to fit into outsiders' films. The outsiders counter this indignation with the glib question, "Do audiences want to spend their money and time watching films by Aborigine, Apache, Hopi, Maori, Zulu, and Zuni directors?" They judiciously conclude that all the public wants to see is a "good film." Unfortunately in America, the radical and incendiary premise of film saturated with color, race, and difference as conceived by indigenous producers and directors is denied when a "good film" is defined by accountants and not by a multiracial film-going public.

Admittedly, Native Americans have contributed our share of clichés in our short run as film and video producers. As my Blackfeet friend Darrell Kipp joked, for a film or video to be Native American, it must have three elements: a buffalo, an eagle, and flute music.

But if we indigenous filmmakers were to showcase our true differences, we would infuse film with the same reverence we have for our oral and performing traditions. By expressing our distinct tribal voices, we would be expounding the indigenous aesthetic.

As a Hopi filmmaker, I would ask, does "larger than life" occur within indigenous cultures? Do adults engage in serious make-believe? What is the closest approximation to film in our cultural experience? In what sit-

uation do we immerse ourselves totally and accept all of the occasion's permutations, the logical and the illogical together?

In my experience, it is our oral tradition and "Tikiveh," which combines dance, song, ritual, ceremony, and worship.

What is our understanding of oral traditions and the Tikiveh? First, it is performance. It is the old one, whose every expressive wrinkle and fold radiate humor and imminent, barely contained revelation, similar to the suspense created by an overblown balloon. This quality suggests a source of the Hopi expression "tsikyaknani," meaning "to break," as in "to break an egg." To tell a new story or sing a new song is to break an egg. Needless to say, this original breaking is always delivered in the mother tongue, and the song forms are repetitive, serving memorization and stability, like the mnemonic designs of computers, tape recorders, and computer chips.

Second, stories and Tikiveh always have a socially redeeming function. The stories inevitably conclude with "yanhakam" or "yantakat ovi," meaning "this is how" or "this is why." It is both admonishment and encouragement. Tikiveh involves cleansing and reaffirmation of the good life: family and community.



Photos p. 20-21: Victor Masayesva, Jr., courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix

Native Americans have nourished this intimate relationship with the "larger than life," sometimes described as spirituality. When reflecting on our ceremonies and rituals, we understand how crucial that relationship is. If we stretch our tolerance to include film as a conduit for the same experience, then we have the right to demand compassion from the film experience.

Respectful of tribal spirituality and out of a strong faith in the possibilities of film, Native American filmmakers will develop their own stories and, no less important, their own styles and techniques. Rejecting the Hollywood blueprint, we will find alternatives to a cuts-only format and explore special optics instead of prime lenses. Native language would be essential to this expression of the Native American experience. Character motivation would reflect our understanding of the world. The technical conventions of filmmaking would shift, evidenced in how we use a 360° pan to tell a story, rather then show facility in a physically complicated move; where we begin and end a sequence without drawing attention to complicated dolly track configurations, but showing why motion must follow a certain order; how we look at motion itself; how the transitions between events are not clichés—shots of moving cars to reach the next set or situation—but expressions of the rhythms of a unique order: falling rain, a newborn foal, mature grasslands, or a personal object or item infused with ancient meaning. This new film logic driving the Native American aesthetic would permeate technique, style, dramatic continuity; narrative would begin, conclude, cut, and be extended without didacticism. All this begins with a Native American director.

There is no lack of stories. There are at least as many scripts as there are Native American tribes—around 500. In addition, beyond the tribal entities lies the legendary story pool, the greater number of stories we grew up with. (Disney dipped into this during the sixties with the Hopi story *The Boy and the Eagle*.) But, we might ask, who is the author if the material is derived from a communal base? While some would argue for the primacy of the scriptwriter in creating a distinct Native American film form, our communal relation to these stories prevents our repeating this Hollywood model. In fact, if a Native American screenwriter were to demand the same privileges as Joe Eszterhas, he or she would be run out of the community. So the screenwriter has a different position in the world of Native American filmmaking, with the recognition of tribal stories as intellectual properties that belong to a clan, a ceremony, or a season and which therefore cannot be copyrighted by an individual and dispensed as private property.

Some of my colleagues in the Native American Producers Alliance believe there is no Native American aesthetic, only personal visions. However, in forming an alliance, we have agreed there is a common process that derives from the teachings of accountability from our parents, grandparents, clan, and tribal elders. This is becoming clearer with each new NAPA film. But I believe that, in defining our commonality, we need to undertake a deep searching and questioning of our indigenous creative expressions and languages. And we must do this before letting go of our strong sense of clan and tribal identity.

By the year 2000, I predict that language and the songs made from these languages will not be used so profoundly. The created words—so

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REPLAYING THE NATIVE EXPERIENCE

By Beverly R. Singer

Films and videos by American Indians are as much social products as cultural ones. The significance of being a filmmaker from an indigenous community resides in our relation to our way of living—more specifically, to the concepts of reciprocity, creativity, storytelling, and clan-based relations.

Native producers' particular relationship to community is inevitably revealed in our productions as the ties, formed in childhood, are meant to keep us connected throughout our lifetimes. We are taught the importance of ancestral ways of life that encourage us to live properly in the world while never forgetting our homeland. Hearing native songs or participating in dances feeds our soul and reminds us to always offer thanks. Being responsible for each other is the old way of being, which our elders say binds us to our creation, when we were given our original instructions for living.

What sets us apart from each other is the geographic placement of communities, identified as Choctaw, Hopi, Makah, Dine' or Navajo, Yu'pik, and so forth. But the similarities between Native Americans is striking, based on our experience of the same colonial history. Likewise, our sense of modernity remains an important piece of our individuality, while our ancestral stories are clan-based and tied to the ceremonial life that maintains the community.

There are six productions by Native Americans, completed between 1984 and 1994, that, in my opinion, represent works that are touchstones to the significance of community, ancestral lifeways, and identity. These programs are *Eyes of the Spirit*, by Alexie Isaac; *Song Journey* and *Navajo Talking Picture*, by Arlene Bowman; *The Honour of All*, by Phil Lucas; *Imagining Indians*, by Victor Masayesva, Jr, and *Lighting the Seventh Fire*, by Sandy Johnson Osawa. These works are representative of the ways in which Native filmmakers relate to their communities. And they help us remember where we come from, so we can return home, just as our ancestral grandmothers and grandfathers foretold, to be with them at the end of our days.

Eyes of the Spirit (1984) is a video about the revival of Inuit mask dancing, directed by Alexie Isaac, a Yup'ik Inuit (Eskimo), and produced and written by Corey Flintoff, a National Public Radio host, for KYUK in Bethel, Alaska. During the 1980s, the Yup'ik Inuit, who live on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in Southwest Alaska, began reviving their ancient arts. These included ceremonial mask making, which virtually ceased after the introduction of Christianity, devolving into the production of art objects for tourists.

The heart of this video captures the construction of three new dance masks, showing the master carvers and their young apprentices working quietly side by side. The revival of mask dancing as depicted in this video helped disseminate and restore the Yup'ik Inuit's ceremonial life. It also gave director Alexie Issac hope that Yup'ik culture is still very much alive.

Isaac was KYUK's first Yup'ik videographer and is now one of Alaska's leading independent producers. Through his work, Isaac says, "I am able to share [Yup'ik culture] with hundreds of other Yup'iks." Instrumental in this is KYUK, a public television and radio station which began broadcasting in Western Alaska in the seventies. Since its inception, KYUK has bridged the experiences of Inuit and non-Inuits through a truly collaborative programming effort which highlights the culture and people of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region. The station is recognized internationally for its unique productions, including *Eyes of the Spirit*, which won second prize in the Chicago Community Access Network Community Television Competition in 1986.



Los Angeles resident Arlene Bowman is a graduate of the UCLA film program. Her most recent production, *The Song Journey: Traditional Native Women Singers* (1994), documents her travels to Native American powwows in search of women singers.

Since powwows have traditionally been the domain of males, women pow-wow

singers are relatively few in number and represent a significant change in powwow protocol. In *The Song Journey*, the significance of song among Native Americans is discussed by the women, who were drawn to singing in their youth. Bowman's video challenges the accepted views of Native women and invites debate about gender roles within the native community.

In addition to this, *The Song Journey* is a testament to the personal changes the director herself experienced in relation to her community roots. This is evident when comparing the work to her earlier film, *Navajo Talking Picture* (1986). Bowman had been raised off the reservation and spoke no Navajo. She hoped to use this film as an opportunity to establish a relationship with her Navajo-speaking grandmother and begin learning the language. She relentlessly pursues her grandmother on camera, trying to convince her to participate in the film. The grandmother, visibly upset, declines. Bowman's apparent lack of sensitivity was a major departure for any Native American. To behave in such a way is disrespectful to the clan's relationship of child to elder. It ultimately resulted in an entirely different film from the one the director had envisioned.

But Bowman here produces a realistic look at the impact of being culturally ignorant about her Navajo heritage. Her inability to speak the Navajo language, coupled with her persistent efforts to push ahead with the film, is indicative of how Native Americans have been acculturated to assert themselves, a fact Bowman acknowledges in her film.

Like *Navajo Talking Picture*, *Song Journey* is a story about cultural change. But it also shows personal change. Bowman's willingness to learn more about native protocol leads her to become a direct participant in the powwow and find acceptance within the powwow circle. At the film's conclusion, almost as an ode to her grandmother, Bowman sings a song in Navajo as scenes from *Navajo Talking Picture* are shown.



Navajo powwow singers in Arlene Bowman and Jeanine Moret's *Song Journey*.
Courtesy ITVS

THE SEVERE AND DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION ON Native Americans began in the fifties and peaked in the late sixties. It was also during this time that many cultural precepts were ignored and forgotten. *The Honour of All* (1986), produced and directed by Choctaw filmmaker Phil Lucas, is a dramatic reenactment of the paralyzing impact of the 90 percent alcoholism rate in the community near Alkali Lake, also known as "alcohol lake," in British Columbia. It also charts the complete reversal of this problem.

The people of Alkali Lake wanted to present their solution to other Native Americans, calling for a return to spiritual principles alcohol had taken from them and for a renewed embrace of their culture. According to Lucas, the entire production was achieved by community consensus. The project idea was presented to him by a friend. He agreed to discuss it with the Alkali Lake Band community and by the end of meeting they had outlined the story and cast everyone in the various roles.

The most telling parts of the program are when the participants from Alkali Lake describe what it was like watching themselves in the completed video. Says one man with tears of gratitude, "When I looked at myself, I wasn't acting, I was just replaying my life."

The significance of this project is that, for the first time, Native Americans could see the damage inflicted by alcoholism. Since its release, *The Honour of All* has continued to inspire Native communities to work toward sobriety, and Lucas has continued collaborating with other Native communities to help tell their stories.

IMAGINING INDIANS (1992), BY HOPI FILMMAKER VICTOR MASAYESVA, Jr., addresses the manifestation of the "Indian" as a cultural non-entity in popular culture. Through interviews with Native American actors, it becomes clear that Hollywood has not changed its perception of "Indians," but holds the same attitudes as when it first began employing them in early Westerns. In addition to showing how Hollywood has appropriated Native culture into stereotypical images, *Imagining Indians* depicts how the impact of commerce upon Native communities has led to a slow disintegration of values and respect for Native lifeways.

The residue left by Hollywood filmmakers when they entered Masayesva's community is demonstrated through verité footage in which Hopi elders voice their opposition to the filming of *Dark Wind* on Hopi soil. Their discussion (conducted in Hopi with English subtitles) concerns the sacredness of the area where the producers wish to film. Despite the elders' opposition, elected Hopi leaders permit the filming after a financial agreement is reached.

Masayesva's aesthetic treatment of and sensitivity toward Hopi life are woven into the film through the director's use of transitions. After the interview segments with Lakotas regarding their participation in *Dances with Wolves*, for instance, we see an approaching afternoon thunderstorm that stretches across Hopi territory, suggesting the filmmaker's return home. In another transition, rustling leaves form a mirage of sea waves through which female "fancy shawl dancers" emerge at a powwow. This occurs as a woman's voice speaks about the loss in mean-

ing when the practice of trading goods and services was replaced by a cash economy.

Imagining Indians raises ethical questions about the importance of cultural integrity and how, within our own communities, we need to protect the things we say are important to us: elders, land, ceremonial art forms, and life itself.



Victor Masayesva, Jr., in publicity still for *Imagining Indians*. Courtesy filmmaker

Lighting the Seventh Fire (1994) is an activist film project by Sandra Johnson Osawa about the efforts of the Chippewa in northern Wisconsin to protect their right to spear fish the same way their ancestors did before the arrival of whites. Osawa had been involved as an activist in an fishing rights struggle in the Northwest by her own tribe, the Makah of Neah Bay, Washington. Hearing about a similar battle in Wisconsin, she headed to the Midwest to video what became an intensely racist anti-Indian campaign.

In 1984, a federal court ruled in favor of the Chippewa's right to fish outside their reservations, honoring the federal treaty signed generations ago. When they began doing so, the local whites, led by fishing sportsmen, organized protests and uglier forms of intimidation and threats against the spear fishermen and their families. A representative of an anti-Chippewa organization is quoted as saying the Chippewa were given a "court license to steal." Although the Chippewa were given no special treatment, the whites were convinced they were going to get all the fish in the state of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin State Game and Fisheries Department in turn decided to enforce a previously mandated reduction in fish catch. Even so, the Chippewa encounter hate, abuse, and threats. Signs carried by whites contain such slogans as "Timber Nigger," "Annual Chippewa Shoot," and "Spear an Indian Squaw, Save a Walleye." A Chippewa man recalls being asked by a young white school child, "Do you Indians still kill cowboys and eat them?"

Because the local whites and, presumably the viewing audience, are ignorant about the history of the Chippewa treaties and cultural practices, Osawa presents this background in the video, told from a tribal perspective. Informed by her own own work in retaining Makah language and songs, Osawa here effectively communicates Chippewa spirituality as manifested in the song and prayers used to quiet the chaos and reduce the fear. Osawa's personal knowledge of the danger surrounding Native rights struggles is extremely important, and through her video we are shown explicit examples of anti-Indian racism about which little has been documented or presented publicly until now.

TACKLING VASTLY DIFFERENT SUBJECTS, ALL OF THESE FILMS AND VIDEOS describe important pieces of Native history. As modern day story-tellers, Osawa and Lucas expose very negative situations—racism and alcoholism. While previous films on similar topics offered no solution or hopeful alternatives for the people, their work ultimately charts a more positive course in the healing of historical wrongs. Likewise Isaac's work provides an example of the resurgence of indigenous culture after years of neglect; Bowman's more personalized films deal with women's issues within Native communities; and Masayesva's film brings to the forefront his concern about Native communities that have little insulation from outside forces.

These six works also reveal some vastly different approaches to mediamaking taken by Native producers today: there's the public television model of *Eyes of the Spirit*; the personal approach of Bowman, a feminist, film school graduate searching for her Native roots; the filmmaking-by-consensus approach of Lucas; the pioneering of a Native aesthetic by Masayesva; and the activist-producer model of Osawa. But whatever their differences, all are engaged in a form of reciprocity, of giving back to their own communities. And each work reflects the importance of maintaining personal ties to our communities, so that we can once again celebrate the beauty of our cultures.



A Chippewa spear fisherman preps his tool in Sandy Johnson Osawa's forceful documentary on treaty rights and racism, *Lighting the Seventh Fire*. Courtesy videomaker

Beverly Singer is from Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico and resides in New York City. Her recent video, He Wo Un Poh: Recovery in Native America, *was shown at the Vienna International Film Festival in October.*

Distribution sources:

Eyes of the Spirit: KYUK Video Productions, Putch 468, Bethel, Alaska 99559; (907) 543-3131.

The Song Journey: Arlene Bowman (602) 864-1956; *Navajo Talking Picture*: Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606.

The Honour of All, The Alkali Lake Band, Box 4479, Williams Lake, BC Canada V2G 2V5; (604) 440-6511.

Imagining Indians: Is Productions, P.O. Box 747, Hoteville, AZ 86030.

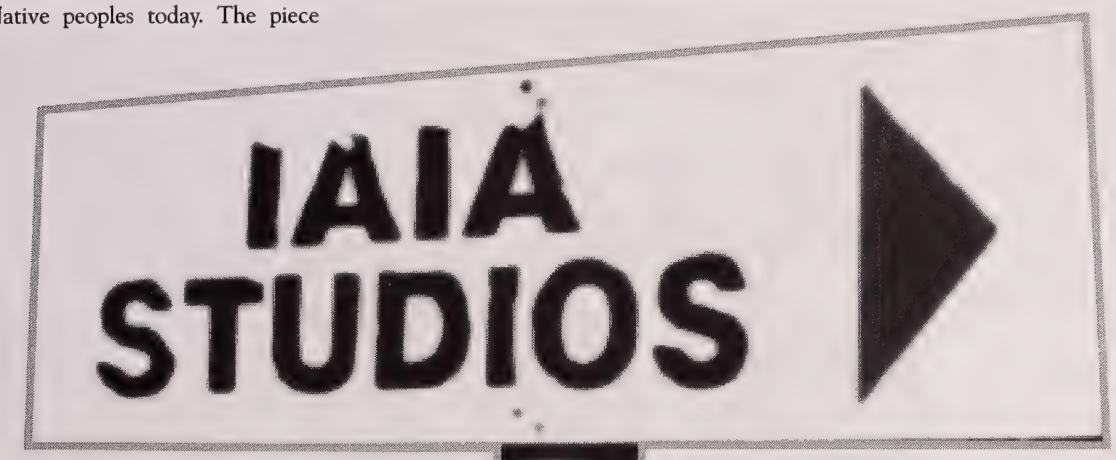
Lighting the Seventh Fire: Upstream Productions, 420 1st Ave. West, Seattle, WA 98119; (206) 281-9177; fax: (206) 284-6963.

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TEACH OUR CHILDREN WELL

By Diane Reyna

Recently a group of Native scriptwriting students were viewing some short documentaries by fellow students enrolled in video field production at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. One video, *Fry Bread—Just Say No*, by Pamela Belgrade, a Turtle Mountain Anishinabe, examined how poor diet contributes to the increase of heart disease and diabetes among many Native peoples today. The piece



focused on a young Isleta Pueblo man, Edward Montoya, employed at the Institute. Edward is shown conscientiously watching his diet—reading nutritional information on packaged foods in the supermarket, preparing meals, exercising. A tight shot on his straining face pulls back to reveal his well-developed body lifting weights. As Edward is seen helping his father throw bales of hay to the horses on their ranch, he explains in a voiceover that his motivation and role model is his father, who through years of hard work has also maintained a trim body. The video ends with the two driving away in a pick-up truck to the sounds of Native musician Keith Secola and the Wild Band of Indians.

After the screening, 18-year-old Gabriel Shaw observed that while growing up on the Pyramid Lake Paiute reservation, watching television and going to the movies, the only "buffed up" person he could relate to was Arnold Schwarzenegger. Until watching this video, Gabriel had never seen a Native person working to maintain a similar body by living a healthy lifestyle. That evening, a positive Native role model exerted a profound impact.

It is this kind of work—images and stories created by Native producers and directors for Native audiences—that is the goal of the video production courses at the Institute of American Indian Arts. IAIA is a unique place for such learning to take place. The student body represents 87 different tribes across North America. Native faculty and staff, in sharing their experiences and stories for students' cameras and microphones and acting as a readily available audience for completed works, are a vital resource to these fledgling videomakers.

One essential point I emphasize in my three-semester Moving Images course is that, as a Native person, I find it easier to relate to the message of a production if it is put in the context of my Native reality. This is best accomplished when the idea comes from a Native perspective in the first place and is based on our cultural understandings and values. These in turn must guide the production through its last edit.

This is the basic instruction given to the 20 or so predominantly Native students enrolled in Moving Images. Early in these courses, advanced as well as beginning students are reminded that the work they do is influenced by their own histories. The hopes of their ancestors, their peers, and future tribal members are with them. Prayers are often said before a major production trip. The video production equipment has been blessed to further strengthen this process. The students are encouraged to honor equipment as well as each other, as they work on various student production crews. (Since the inception of classes at the Institute five years ago, no major piece of production equipment, including three professional video cameras, has been lost to theft or damage.)

In the fall of 1990, a group of professional Native producers and directors gathered in Santa Fe to view work and discuss various issues of Native production. Many visited the Institute. There the students in the Moving Images classes were gathered together and encircled by these individuals, who offered prayers for this next generation of Native film- and videomakers. The influence of that ceremony was far reaching; one student, for example, Hopi David Rogge, went on to work as assistant camera on the award-winning production *Surviving Columbus* and then studied film at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Emphasizing a Native perspective in the instruction of video production at IAIA is the result of my personal experience growing up in a traditional tribal community. I observed that, in my village of Taos Pueblo in Northern New Mexico, tribal members were encourage by our elders to give back to the community. This service could take many forms, such as helping elders in their daily routines, picking up trash, and performing other duties that would preserve and strengthen our tribal ways and traditions. This, coupled with values of generosity and sharing, help ensure the survival of our people.

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The topics selected by IAIA students for their documentaries also reflect this understanding. In her first video production, titled *A Long Way from Home*, Inupiag Bernice Dahl serves her Alaskan community by informing them in a humorous way of the extreme differences in environment and culture that Alaskan students encounter when attending the Institute. When one laments that "there is no place to fish" in Santa Fe, the video cuts to another Alaskan tossing stones into the Santa Fe River, which at the time was a couple of inches deep and a few feet across. This would-be fisherwoman also relates her experience of mistaking Pueblo bread ovens for posh Pueblo dog houses.



IAIA Moving Images class I in Santa Fe Courtesy IAIA

Dine student Victoria Begay produced a public service announcement on the consequences of unsafe sex, targetting a young Native audience. *Pow-Wow Mosh*, by Eli Funaro, a Dakota Sioux creative writing major, examined the origins of mosh dancing and its influence on five Native students attending the Institute. These are just several of the 15 videos produced by IAIA students over the past two years.

The desire for such work was clearly demonstrated in a recent poll conducted by Native American Television, Inc., and published in the *Albuquerque Journal*. Of the 318 tribally affiliated people surveyed, 98 percent said they need and would benefit from television programs produced by Native Americans. The same number also said there is currently not enough programming about Native people on television. Eighty percent indicated they would watch a program about Native people over their favorite television show, if both were on at the same time.

Students enrolled in the video production courses at the Institute are learning essential professional production techniques based on my 18 years of experience as a television news photographer, producer, and director. While the classes are designed to expose the students to as much of the production process as possible, they center on the skills required of a producer and director—positions vital to Native production, since control over image and story rests with these key personnel. It does Native production a disservice if Native people fill only the roles of grips, production assistants, and consultants, because these positions cannot profoundly affect a production's message.

But IAIA is not simply another production training center. These skills can be learned elsewhere. What is not offered at film schools and other media centers is a vital lesson for our next generation of Native film- and videomakers: the traditional value of service back to Native communities. The students fulfill this goal when they provide role models and perspectives that truly reflect the contemporary and traditional realities of Native life today.

Diane Reyna lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico and teaches at the Institute of American Indian Arts.

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delightful and appropriate when heard for the first time, touching our deepest emotions—will no longer be created, as our Native American languages fall into disuse, and we drift away from the inspirational roots. Rain songs for corn fields will not be heard by the clouds.

I see a pan-Indian culture which celebrates a modest, temperate reunion of feelings among tribes and hides fierce, independent, tribal loyalties. Time will come to be perceived in a biological framework, and change will be understood in the small framework of one person's lifetime, like leaves falling, antlers dropping, and snakeskin shedding in a year's heartbeat, rather than in the impersonal spin and gravity of a slow, slow universe.

Sadly, fewer filmmakers knowledgeable about tribal aesthetics continue to create the songs that are sung and danced to by our community. At this late hour, the indigenous aesthetic has become faint. Native American filmmakers have run out of the luxury of access to the creative old-timers, for whom language and song was the ultimate human creation, particularly when woven into ritual, ceremony, performance, or worship. It is critical that we recognize and accept this situation and begin the changes that will stimulate profound and exciting films, originating from an indigenous aesthetic.

I see that television and film continue to struggle with understanding Native Americans in the present. We are now science fiction. I would not be surprised to see *Planet of the Indians* soon and more films with New Age insights on the Native American. It may be that film is the wrong medium for us, an inappropriate, unsympathetic form. Perhaps the Native American aesthetic will mature in theaters constructed for virtual reality, dynamic motion, and hyper-reality conceits, which will fully reveal the profundity of the original experience when the original experience is no longer possible, when the priests are no longer living to provide the conduits into larger-than-life experiences.

The question becomes: What is it that's so important that it must be shared? What are the risks that tribal people are willing to take in order to make this available? Ultimately, what are the risks Native American filmmakers themselves are willing to take?

Victor Masayesva, Jr. is a Hopi filmmaker from the third mesa, with an international reputation; he is sometimes inimical but always provocative.

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ITVS Gets Serious...about series and its future as an independent programming service

By Michele Shapiro

When West Coast filmmaker Jon Moritsugu was picked from a pool of more than 300 applicants to produce an installment of the *TV Families* series back in 1992, he knew the project would be different from any other he had worked on.

For starters, Mortisugu's budget—$360,000 for a one-hour segment—was about 18 times that of the gritty, low-budget features he was used to producing. In addition, the $1.9-million series was commissioned by the Minneapolis-based Independent Television Service (ITVS), the entity created in 1988 by an act of Congress to fund the production and promotion of programs produced by independent film- and videomakers to public broadcasting markets. Since ITVS receives its $6-million annual production budget from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, it is legally obligated to give PBS first broadcast rights. For Moritsugu, public television viewers—a generally older, relatively subdued bunch—are a very different audience from the one usually drawn to his countercultural jabs at the Asian American "model minority."



All in the Families: *TV Families*, an anthology series funded by ITVS, enabled seven independent producers to fulfill their visions while expounding upon the broad theme of family values. Pictured are (clockwise from bottom): Jon Moritsugu's *Terminal U.S.A.*; Todd Haynes' *Dottie Gets Spanked*; Tamara Jenkins' *Family Remains*; and Adrian Velicescu's *The Secret Life of Houses*. Photos: James Dwyer (*Terminal U.S.A.*); Joyce George (*Dottie*); Jim Wasserman (*Family Remains*); Gabriel Kosuth (*Secret Life*); courtesy ITVS

From the beginning, Moritsugu had a plan for appeasing squeamish public television viewers: He would create two versions of *Terminal U.S.A.*, his apocalyptic soap opera about a Japanese American family of junkies, prostitutes, and perverts. The first would ooze with blood, gore, and seminal fluids, while the second, "designed especially for public television," would contain numerous bleeps and "censored" messages.

Because the project is so cheesy and

campy, Moritsugu says, he thought he could get away with spurting blood, but that wasn't the case at all. "Through the process I learned PBS is more conservative than the [broadcast] networks. I had to censor the entire last third of the project," he recalls.

Moritsugu's concessions proved fruitless in the long run. PBS programming execs ultimately rejected the anthology series, leaving ITVS to pitch the series to PBS affiliates on a station-by-station basis. Winnowed down from a pool of 20 semi-finalists, the seven programs present visions of the American family using dramatically varied styles and content: Todd Haynes' *Dottie Gets Spanked*, for instance, deals with a 1950s youngster's obsession with the heroine of an *I Love Lucy*-style sitcom, while Andrew Garrison's *Night Ride*, based on a work of fiction, tells the story of an orphaned teenage boy's ride through Kentucky with his uncle. There's also Shelli Ainsworth's *A Psychic Mom*, a dark comedy in which a divorced suburban mother fills her afternoons with Doris Day-like fantasies; Ayoka Chenzira's *MOTV*, the story of a bicultural Brooklyn couple attempting to have a child; Tamara Jenkins' *Family Remains*, a suburban gothic take on the divorced mother-daughter sitcoms of the seventies; and Adrian Velicescu's *The Secret Life of Houses*, a dark story about the 9-year-old daughter of an alcoholic. From Chenzira's use of video and Super 16 to Moritsugu's use of Panavision, from comedy to drama, from black-and-white to Technicolor, the *TV Families* installments run the gamut in both style and content.



At the Rotterdam International Film Festival in February, ITVS screened several *TV Families* episodes, sponsored a panel discussion on the series, and peddled the package to foreign buyers. (L to R) James Yee, executive director of ITVS; Ayoka Chenzira, producer of *MOTV*, one of the *TV Families* installments; and James Schamus, coordinating producer of the series. Photo: Hélène Caux

Public television's reception of *TV Families* was closely tracked by the independent media community, since this was the first ITVS anthology series offered to the network. But in addition to monitoring PBS, producers were watching ITVS to see how their marketing strategy and station ties were developing. Part of ITVS's mandate, after all, is to devise innovative ways to package and promote the independent projects they fund.

Asked why PBS rejected the series, Donald H. Thoms, director of program management for the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), responds, "While I liked and loved most [of the installments], two were not up to the quality of the rest. Their focus was too narrow." He adds that PBS "would have taken all but the two."

When faced with the decision to break up the series or keep it intact and offer it to PBS' regional networks and individual affiliate stations, ITVS chose the latter route. "We opted to preserve the integrity of the series," says Jim Yee, who replaced John Schott last summer as executive director of ITVS. Yee is a proponent of target marketing, particularly to those public television stations with track records for airing innovative independent work. "Not all the work we produce will be [nationally] broadcast on PBS," Yee acknowledges. "Some of it isn't meant to be."

While Thoms declined to name the two programs with which PBS found fault, sources close to *TV Families* say both were by minority makers. "This is one of the dangers of cherry-picking," says Yee. "It's unfair to pit the makers against each other."

Yee adds that, from the beginning, those involved with the series knew it would be a tough sell. "The stories are challenging for a TV audience. They are eclectic, dark, angry, and provocative," he says.

Several series producers say they were not surprised that the Public Broadcasting Service turned down the final package. "PBS is getting more and more unwilling to show something other than the norm," remarks Andrew Garrison.

James Schamus, *TV Families*' coordinating producer and a member of the series' three-person commissioning team, sums up the feelings of the makers and ITVS when he says, "It would have been great if PBS took the series, but fuck 'em." He points out, however, that since ITVS is contractually obligated to offer an exclusivity window to PBS for three years, the service now has few options other than to offer *TV Families* to the regional networks and affiliate stations within the system.

ITVS brought Gayle Loeber on board nearly two years ago to develop station relations. Loeber, who worked as a public television programmer for 18 years before joining ITVS, is on a first-name basis with many program managers. "They trust me to tell them if things will work or not. In some markets, [a series] just won't work for them. Others broadcast everything [ITVS] puts out." Loeber adds that many stations have established slots for independent work—even if they don't label them as such. On the opposite end, "there are challenges," she admits. "Some stations haven't broadcast anything we've funded, even if they are members of the National Programming Service [which receive PBS programs via satellite feed]. We have our wrestling matches on an individual basis."

In October, the *TV Families* series was fed nationally to public television stations by the American Program Service (APS), an alternative public television programming service. At press time, 64 licensees (approximately 140 stations) had expressed interest in airing the series during the holiday season or just after the new year, including nine in major markets and five state networks, according to Robyn De Shields,

director of communications at ITVS.

Seattle station KCTS will be the first to broadcast *TV Families* in its entirety as part of a new showcase for alternative voices, *Wildcard*, airing Saturday evenings at 11:30. KCTS also will air the ITVS series *The Ride*, an eight-parter by and about teens, which got a thumbs down from PBS last summer. "We worked to create a time block with voices different from *Nova* or other PBS offerings," says KCTS program manager Jane Sheridan. With both *TV Families* and *The Ride*, she says, "Our viewers can expect to see TV that's a little different. Both shows have very interesting messages and the ability to hold an audience."

But are innovative anthology series such as *TV Families* destined to be relegated to late-night time slots or cherry-picked by affiliates? "Any station can choose the parts of the series they want to air," Yee says, "but the idea is for us to present them with a series, not a package of one-offs."

C'est La Niche

With a marketing and promotion budget of $25,000 to $30,000 for *TV Families*, ITVS's communications department has devised a dual-track strategy as radical for TV as the programming. But the independent community is divided as to the effectiveness of the plan.

Track one involved packaging and pitching *TV Families* first to the PBS network, then, if rejected, to the affiliates. Track two was completely out of the ordinary for promoting TV series: ITVS made the rounds to film festivals, a venue dominated by narrative features and documentaries. The series debuted as a work-in-progress at 1993's Independent Feature Film Market in Manhattan, then was featured in whole or part at festivals in Toronto and Rotterdam, plus Sundance, the Mill Valley Film Festival, the New York Film Festival, and the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.

It was Schamus who pushed ITVS to submit the series to festivals. As a feature film producer, Schamus has exhibited a particular savvy for utilizing festivals to create a buzz around his projects, such as Todd Haynes' *Poison*, Tom Kalin's *Swoon*, and Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet*, among others, then parlaying this into sales. If *TV Families* projects started receiving praise, awards, and interest from foreign buyers, then the pressure would be on PBS to run a much-lauded and talked about series.

As a result of the festival exposure, several of the makers received awards: Jenkins' *Family Remains* won the Special Jurors' Award for Excellence in Short Filmmaking at Sundance. Haynes' *Dottie Gets Spanked* received the Grand Prize at the USA Film Festival, and Chenzira's *MOTV* was awarded the First Place Prize by the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame. "The payoff for mediamakers is minimal in terms of money," says Schamus, "but for a maker to show up and interact with an audience is all part of the experience."

Since the individual producers own foreign rights to their projects, Schamus acted as the series' sales rep while in Rotterdam, pitching it as a package to foreign buyers, but to no avail. Few, if any, deals had been closed at press time.

Although the makers involved with the project say the festival strategy provided good exposure overall, Mortisugu points out that "most festivals are geared toward theatrical films. Some people I spoke with at Rotterdam didn't even know what CPB and PBS were." Garrison adds that sometimes publicity garnered at festivals can actually hamper a project's chance of getting ink for its broadcast premiere. Moritsugu adds that ITVS' seemingly random selection of festivals should have included some geared specifically to TV or educational markets. Still, the festival screenings did serve to drum up some press for the series and ITVS, which, according to Shamus, "was having an identity problem with the community that created it."

ITVS also arranged for a screening tour at museums and media arts centers in major markets, including Philadelphia, Portland, Columbus, Minneapolis, New Orleans, and New York. The first stop on the tour was the Neighborhood Film/Video Project in Philadelphia last July, which drew crowds of about 50 per night—fairly substantial for a media arts center. Gretjen Clausing, assistant director of NFVP, applauds ITVS' back-door strategy of using devotees of independent work to spread the word. "Most people whose work we showed are known at media arts centers but not neccesarily to TV audiences. People liked the work and they'll let others know."

The screening tour also was used to build station relations. ITVS invited the program managers from local PBS affiliates to view the series with an audience. Even if the managers were unable to attend, the screenings

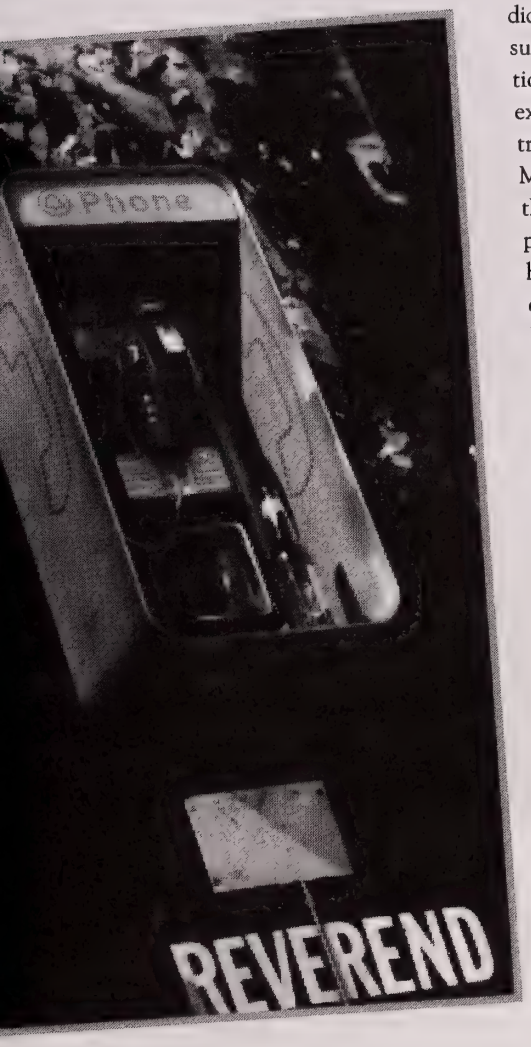


Reverend Pedro is one of dozens of verbalizers featured in Josh Blum and Bob Holman's *The United States of Poetry*, a four-hour, ITVS-funded series, which will be submitted to PBS for consideration before year's end.
Photo: Jeff Day, courtesy ITVS

inevitably attracted the attention of local press. "The more a programmer hears about the series, the more credibility it has," De Shields says.

Renee Tajima, an independent producer who worked on ITVS's *Declarations* series—which was broadcast on 247 PBS stations in May—believes the festival strategy is the wrong way to go. "Festivals attract different audiences than those who watch public television," she opines. "Instead ITVS should spend their money on display ads in *TV Guide*."

Since ITVS has such a small marketing department, several makers involved with *TV Families* wonder why the service did not turn to them for suggestions on promotion. "We've all had experience with self-distribution," says Moritsugu, who believes the *TV Families* campaign could and should have been more radical. "The promotion has to reflect that the whole premise for the series—that low-budget filmmakers were given substantial budgets to work with—is a neat one."



A New Batch of Series

In many ways, *TV Families* has served as a marketing and promotional experiment for ITVS. So far, ITVS has offered three series to PBS, and only one has been accepted for national broadcast. Claypoint Productions' three-part *Declarations*, a compilation of essays on life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in the U.S., was broadcast on 247 PBS stations in May. *The Ride* was submitted to PBS this summer and rejected. Like *TV Families*, it is now being offered to individual stations. At press time 71 stations planned to broadcast the series.

Most of ITVS' marketing experience to date has come from dealing with one-off programs funded through its Open Calls. A small number of these have garnered coveted slots on the prime-time hard feed as stand-alone specials or *P.O.V.* presentations, including Kathe Sandler's *A Question of Color* amd Paul Kwan's *Anatomy of a Springroll*. But now, ITVS will have to prove its mettle with series promotion. *TV Families* and *The Ride* are just the beginning; five other series are nearing completion.

ITVS' series-in-progress were screened at this year's Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM). The reception within the film world was enthusiastic. As several who attended the screenings can attest, whatever reasons PBS may find for rejecting the series, quality will not be one.

The IFFM screenings included the to-be-titled *HIV Television Project*; a four-hour, $1.4 million magazine-format series covering issues for HIV-positive communities; *The United States of Poetry*, a four-hour, $1.1 million series in which Americans speak their minds; *The Ride*, an eight-part, $1.4 million series that follows six teens in search of their identities around the country; *The Question of Equality*, a four-hour, $1.5 million series about the gay rights struggle in the U.S. and *From Signal to Noise*, a three-hour, $1.4 million series about how television affects our lives. Also in the works is *Animated Women*, a four-part showcase of animation projects funded as Open Calls. The series marks ITVS' first attempt to package one-off programs to entice series-hungry PBS execs. "We're hoping stations will pick it up for Women's History Month," says Sybil DelGaudio, coproducer of the series. All the series but *From Signal to Noise* are due to be delivered to ITVS in late 1994.

One buzz-getter at the IFFM was *The United States of Poetry*, coproduced by Joshua Blum and Bob Holman for Washington Square Films. The stars of the series, Blum pointed out during a panel discussion on ITVS series, are Americans in search of their own voices. The series features a range of poets from cowboys and square dance callers to cleaning women and leather-clad East Villagers. In one memorable sequence, a twentysomething New York woman delivers a schizophrenic monologue about her need for independence versus her need for a relationship.

The panelists, who included Blum and senior or executive producers Juanita Anderson (*HIV Project*), Isaac Julien (*The Question of Equality*), and Cara Mertes (*Signal to Noise*), among others, gushed about their positive experiences with ITVS. "We are making a real risky program with some strong political stuff and strong messages," Blum said. "At no point did ITVS say to us 'If you want to get it on TV, take that out.' That's a significant thing."

Juanita Anderson, who previously worked as series producer for the long-running African American series *Say Brother* (WGBH/Boston), also sang ITVS's praises: "In my twenty-some-odd years of public television experience, this has been the most nourishing. PBS hasn't [focused on] the issues that we address in the series. Even working with public television stations, there's always a fight to claim priority. With ITVS, what I'm committed to doing is what ITVS is committed to."

It's been quite some time since such glowing comments about ITVS have been heard from producers. These are welcome signs. Interestingly, nobody on the panel appeared troubled that their series may not make it to the PBS network. Nor did panelist Shauna Garr, executive producer of *The Ride*, seem vexed that hers hadn't. ITVS execs, armed with press kits for the series, proudly boasted that 46 stations had already signed on at press time to broadcast *The Ride* this fall. (That number has since increased to 71.)

First developed two years ago as part of ITVS' Generation initiative, *The Ride* follows six teens as they travel across the country and make videos about issues of importance to them, ranging from poverty on a Lakota reservation to an African American football player's life in an affluent white suburb and one teen's battle with an eating disorder.

When asked why PBS rejected the series, Thoms, who was present at the ITVS panel, replied, "The extraordinary moments didn't overpower the ones that weren't. The storytelling wasn't good enough." He then added that "Public television doesn't have an audience of youth."

Neil Sieling, executive producer of the *Alive TV* series, broadcast on many public television stations, finds PBS' response difficult to swallow. "Other people are falling over themselves to find programming for the

twentysomething generation," he observes. "If PBS chooses to ignore this audience, they'll have a bumpy ride ahead in the future."

ITVS' Loeber says she sent videotapes of *The Ride* to individual program managers, many of whom were concerned about how they would get teens—not their usual audience—to tune in. "A lot of the audience will come to the series as word-of-mouth gets out," she says confidently.

Congress to ITVS: Fasten Your Seatbelts

In its first three years as an operational programming service, ITVS has managed to withstand the heat from right wingers in Congress as well as intense criticism from the field that rallied to create it.

Independent media artists initially were frustrated by ITVS' inability to be all things to all makers. Part of this simply was sour grapes; only 13 were chosen from the pool of approximately 2,000 applicants for the first Open Call, for instance, leaving 1,987 disappointed producers. But then there was valid criticism by grantees of their contracts and a feeling that ITVS was bunkering down, stonewalling communications, and isolating itself from the community that created it.

Many were also miffed by ITVS' surreptitious handling of the *Declarations* series. Feeling pressure from Congress to get *something* on PBS before the end of his tenure last June, John Schott hand-selected an independent production company to produce the project rather than soliciting proposals from the field. Schott's plan worked, in part. PBS did broadcast the series, and members of Congress *loved* it. But the plan also backfired; independents, even those recruited to work on the project, were left with a bad taste for the fledgling TV service.

Just recently the independent community has begun to cut ITVS some slack. "With a $6-million budget, they just can't do everything," says Blum. "People have made too much of ITVS series not getting on the air. The main thing is that they preserve their integrity."



A Ride on the Wild Side: In Shauna Garr's ITVS-funded series *The Ride*, teen interviewers take a tough, honest look at the problems facing their generation. So far 71 individual PBS-affiliated stations have expressed interest in airing the series, which was rejected earlier this year by the national network.
Photo: Storm Hale, courtesy ITVS

Public television stations also are pleased with what they have seen. According to ITVS's Loeber, "[Station] support for ITVS has increased in the past two yeasr. At first their was a lot of concern on the stations' part. Some thought the money [Congress] allotted to ITVS should have gone to them."

Most in the field agree that with alternative venues to public television springing up every day—including niche cable networks such as Bravo's Independent Programming Channel and the Applause Network—ITVS needs to alter the exclusivity clause of its contract with CPB to allow for a window shorter than three years. Yee says plans to do so are in the works. "We need to expand broadcast opportunities into classrooms and homes," he says.

Yet with CPB in the midst of reauthorization and a more conservative Congress expected to be voted in this fall, ITVS' future remains in question. The field may feel good about the caliber of series and one-off programs ITVS has funded this year and the efforts it has made to place the works on PBS affiliates, but will Congress look solely at the hard stats of what's been fed over the national feed?

According to Yee, the service is serious about producing more series, which currently account for two-thirds of ITVS's production budget. "Series hold value for us and I believe it's a viable way to use our limited money wisely," he says.

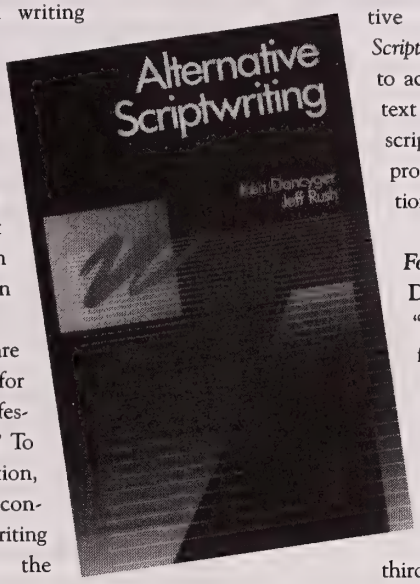
Some, however, believe ITVS must take a more aggressive stance with PBS. *Alive TV*'s Sieling suggests the independent field rally behind the series, much as they did in the creation of the service. "ITVS needs to raise the stakes with PBS," he says. "They go in alone and PBS doesn't feel pressure to air the work. The force of the community could make a big difference."

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

By Vanessa B. Ira

SCREENWRITING BOOKS

Bookstores all over the country are overflowing with manuals on writing screenplays. The proliferation of film schools has done much to encourage such books, as does a media environment that entices film auteurs with fifteen minutes of fame.



Which of these are the best, both for novices and for professional scriptwriters? To tackle this question, *The Independent* contacted five screenwriting professors across the country.

Three singled out ***Alternative Scriptwriting: Writing Beyond the Rules*, by Jeff Rush and Ken Dancyger (Focal Press, 1991; 2nd ed. forthcoming in June 1995)**. The volume is a look beyond the traditional three-act structure into an investigation of genre, tone, and character, according to Francisco Menendez (assistant professor of Production and Screenwriting at the University of Nevada). The text is intended for those excited about writing "beyond the mainstream," says Menendez. Though "not as alternative as some would hope," it nonetheless remains effective in suggesting how characters can be created in alternative ways.

For Bill Neff (professor of Writing, Directing, Understanding Movies, TV & Video at Montana State University), *Alternative Scriptwriting* proves an invaluable tool for its suggestions on working with genre, looking at characters in a different light, examining background and foreground stories, and developing tone and voice. "It looks at scriptwriting as an art that must break the rules," Neff adds.

Eran Preis (professor of Screenwriting and Production at Temple University and co-author of *Beyond the Walls*, 1984 Oscar nominee for Best Foreign Film) likes how Dancyger and Rush question some of the codes of the conventional three-act structure. With dialogue, Preis elaborates, it is not saying everything all the time. Or allowing irony to surface. Or creating tension through the use or absence of sound. With character, it is going beyond the clichéd active sort that follows the American dream. Or experimenting with group characters the way Altman has done in *Nashville* and *Shortcuts*. "In an industry striving for commercial success," says Preis, "the best way for a writer to shine and get an edge is to, first, understand conventions and then alter them in innovative and exceptional ways. *Alternative Scriptwriting* offers its readers excellent tools to achieve this goal." As Preis put it, the text does its job well in helping the novice scriptwriter in particular avoid the trap of producing script elements that are "imitations of imitations."

Syd Field's *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* (3d ed., Dell, 1994) is often described as a "classic" and "one of the bibles of the film trade." Preis recommends this volume for the accessible, step-by-step manner employed by the author to motivate and encourage a screenwriter in his or her struggle to transfer ideas, feelings, and thoughts from the mind to the screen. The third edition has been updated to include the specifics of writing on computer. Field's book was also called noteworthy by Robert Foshko (Area Head of Screenwriting, University of Texas/Austin), along with another Field book, *The Screenwriter's Workbook*. Foshko cautions that while Field's rules may seem a bit restrictive, the book offers useful discussions of the screenwriting craft. Neff, on the other hand, contrasted Field's "ideal" movie architecture—based on classic theories of dramatic construction—with the Dancyger/Rush "alternative scriptwriting" approach, which suggests that some stories just do not fit into the basic three-act formula.

Computer software for scriptwriters not only can help format a screenplay, but can act as an educational tool, as indicated by the fact that two professors recommended a screenwriting software program called ***Dramatica*, by Melanie Ann Phillips and Chris Huntley (Screenplay Systems, 1994)**. Neff explains that this software, is most useful in organizing the various elements in a story, such as theme, character and plot. It keeps the writer on target as the story moves from idea to completed draft. Preis agrees with this, suggesting that the program is particularly useful as a checklist after the first draft of a script has been written.

"In the end, scriptwriting books cannot teach one to come up with ideas or with one's own voice," Preis advises. "These books, however, teach the language that allows expression of those ideas, or the successful telling of those 'backyard' or personal stories one knows about so well."

Alternative Scriptwriting coauthor Jeff Rush, in turn, recommends non-traditional books that encourage the film writer's imagination to wander. "I don't use a text to teach writing," says Rush (Director, MFA Program, Radio-Television-Film, Temple University). "I free associate connections between the stuff I've read and things that come up in student writing." In a class discussion of how action is used to develop the tension inherent in a character, Rush used the "Accountant" from **Ethan Canin's *The Palace Thief* (Random House, 1994)**, a collection of four fictional portraits. "Accountant" tells the story of "an unhappy accountant who loses the one client who might have brought him success in order to steal Willie Mays' garters." ***Writing Fiction*, a basic textbook for short story writers by R.V. Cassill (Prentice-Hall, 1975)**, is also used by Rush, particularly its chapter "Choosing a Subject," which opens with a cogent description of the writer's obligation to his or her own experience and voice. Finally for Rush, ***Lessons with Einsenstein* (Da Capo Press, 1979), by Vladimir Nizhny**, presents a model for writers to connect interpretation to action and explains the function of stage direction in a script.

Other scriptwriting books recommended by our five experts are:

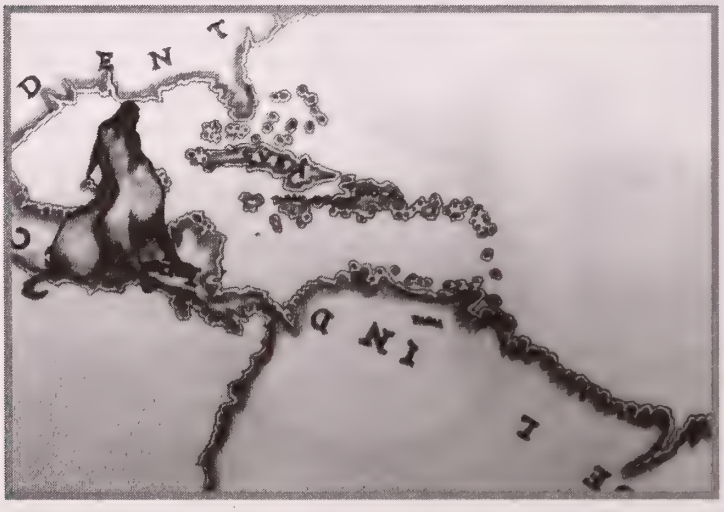
- ***Making a Good Script*, by Linda Seger (Samuel French, 1994 ed)**, which Foshko describes as "a very useful and romantic journey" into the essence of what really makes movies work and how to build toward that result.
- ***The Art of Dramatic Writing*, by Lajos Egri (Simon and Schuster, 1960)**. Although published quite awhile back, it remains in print, Foshko says, "because it is timeless."
- **The New Screenwriter Looks at the New Screenwriter, by William Froug (Silman-James, 1991).** The crop of writers interviewed is diverse, says Menendez, and their work covers a wide range of subjects and genres.
- ***The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure and Screenwriters*, by Christopher Vogler (Silman James Press, 1992)**, Menendez's recommendation for writers who aim at writing melodramas with active characters.
- ***Lew Hunter's Screenwriting 434* (Pedigree, 1993)**, Neff's recommendation for a hands-on book that does not dwell so much on theorizing.
- ***Writing the Screenplay*, by Alan A. Armer (Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1988)**, which Preis describes as a practical, down-to-earth text enriched by revealing interviews with accomplished writers, such as Paddy Chayefsky and Frank Pierson.

Vanessa B. Ira is an editorial intern at The Independent *pursuing her M.A. degree in Publishing Studies at New York University.*

In & Out of Production

By Mitch Albert

The tale wags the dog in Ruth Hayes' film, **Reign of the Dog: A Re-Visionist History** (15 min., 16mm). The European conquest of the Americas is explored using an evocative method, employing allegorical and documentary images, maps, and text—not to mention the Dog. The Dog is "not simply a satire of territoriality. From the atrocities committed against Native people by Spanish fighting dogs, the hunting [with dogs] of escaped slaves in the South," and the use of police dogs against civil rights demonstrators during the sixties, to the 1990 LAPD K9 Patrol, the Dog is a metaphor for centuries of oppression. The Dog appears amusing at first, "but he gradually reveals himself to be the aggressive, consuming beast against whom we struggle to survive." *Reign of the Dog: A Re-Visionist History*, Ruth Hayes, 3317 18th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98144; (206) 721-3721.



Old Fido is a metaphor for centuries of oppression in Ruth Hayes' experimental documentary, *Reign of the Dog: A Re-Visionist History*.
Photo: Lynn Hamrick, courtesy filmmaker

"There were pirates everywhere... swimming with knives in their mouths and headbands... they wanted gold and pretty girls. All the pretty girls put grease on their faces to look ugly.... People got so frightened they jumped overboard to swim for land and there the monks saved us." This is a record provided by one Vietnamese student recalling her terrifying journey to the U.S. In **Between the Crack** (32 min., VHS), documentarian Paula Sepinuck follows the production of a play by four Vietnamese refugee students in Philadelphia. The play is a means for its makers to vent their often devastating memories of the past, their hardships in adapting to a new culture, and their dreams for the future. *Between the Crack*, Helene Fisher, Select Media, Inc., 225 Lafayette St., ste. 1102, NY, NY 10012; (212) 431-8923; fax: 8946.

A certain old, dilapidated building sits in Portland, Maine, with boarded-up windows and a graffiti tag. Built in 1828, it is now an abandoned afterthought. But in the 1800s and early 1900s, if you were African American and trying to establish a community within a hostile, racist environment, this building was **The Anchor of the Soul** (60 min., video). Filmmaker Karen Odlin has documented the life that once was focussed upon this building, the Green Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Formerly the Abyssinian Church, this structure was the site of abolitionist rallies, the against-all-odds education of black children, and the center of spiritual and social life for the many African American families who flocked to the community. Today the fate of the church rests on the decisions made by the management company that owns it, but Odlin has resurrected its significance. *The Anchor of the Soul*, Northeast Historic Film, PO Box 900, dept. SK, Bucksport, ME 04416; (800) 639-1636; fax: (207) 469-7875. To arrange bookings, call Karen Odlin at (207) 799-9636.

Think you know everything there is to know about Djemma el Fna? If you knew Djemma el Fna like Steven Montgomery knows Djemma el Fna... In **Morocco: The Past and Present of Djemma el Fna** (15 min., video), the filmmaker profiles the eponymous town square of Marrakech from a local's perspective. Visitors to the city are awed by the "atmosphere" of the square, rife as it is with acrobats, musicians, and storytellers all vying for the tourists' entertainment dollars. But Blaid the snake charmer is "intrigued by the lifestyles and music of the West." He yearns for a better life for his son, who in turn has a yen for the dancing-snake trade. Shot on Hi8, Montgomery reports that the "unusual quality" of Moroccan sunlight—which attracted Delacroix and Matisse, among others—made the transition "beautifully" from life to video. *Morocco: The Past and Present of Djemma el Fna*, Triad Productions, 400 West 43rd St., #34A, NY, NY 10036; (212) 736-9279.

There is a place in rural Mexico where "fat is beautiful," women run the economy, and "women's work" is never a disrespectful or condescending term. The Zapotec people of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in southern Oaxaca are the focus of **A Skirt Full of Butterflies** (15 min., video), produced by Ellen Osborne and Maureen Gosling. Anthropologically speaking, the Zapotecs inhabit a "partnership society" in which one is "first a human being and only incidentally a man or a woman." This film, a study for a longer treatment of the same subject to be shot in 16mm, is "a visual love poem to the Isthmus women." The narrative centers around five Zapotecas whose stories are integrated with regional scenes of work, festivities, music, poetry, and painting. The Zapotecs, through the film, confirm an old assertion by Karl Marx that the degree of civilization of a given society can be discerned by the status of its women. *A Skirt Full of Butterflies*, Osborne/Gosling Productions, 2019 Hearst Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709; (510) 549-1595; fax: (510) 525-1204.

What's in a nabe? **Nothing to Lose** (appr. 90 min., Super 16), director Eric Bross' first feature, is a "classic love triangle" set in a New Jersey Irish-Italian neighborhood, and it's their surroundings that shape the characters' hopes and longings. Four childhood friends now in their twenties take different (and intersecting) routes in their search for identity. In the mix: broken homes, business schemes, loan sharks, gambling, betrayal, and revenge. It's a world "where the American Dream is fast becoming just that... a dream." The film is currently in postproduction and in search of completion funds. *Nothing To Lose*, Nothing To Lose Productions, 431 Riverside Dr., ste. 5C , NY, NY 10025; (212) 864-1941; fax: 1807.

Ain't no ukeleles: Susan Friedman goes down home Hawaiian in her documentary **Ki ho'alu: That's Slack Key Guitar** (57 min., 16mm). If the title reference has a bluesian tang, that's synchronicity—Ki ho'alu is Hawaiian blues. Introduced to the islands by freewheeling Spanish and Mexican cowboys in the 1800s, guitars were taken up by the Hawaiian people, and the strings loosened—that's "slacked"—to better mesh with their own music. Slack key performers learn a complex articulation of chords, resulting in an unusual, haunting sound. (The style has influenced continental musicians like Ry Cooder and Chet Atkins.) The film doubles as a portrait of Raymond Kaleoalohapoinoleohelemanu Kane, a 72-year-old slack key master whose thick, welder's hands bring forth a soft, tender sound from his guitar. The film follows this gregarious man, who has received a National Heritage

Fellowship from the NEA, as well as other ki ho'alu musicians, each relating his or her own stories. Their words are interlaced with archival photos of the old ranches, the cowboys, and and the early performers. *Ki ho'alu: That's Slack Key Guitar*, Studio on the Mountain, 2850 Lobitos Creek Rd., Half Moon Bay, CA 94019; (415) 726-1693.

"A Love Crazed Policeman," begins the promo come-on to Matthew Sullivan's comedy pilot **Love and Bullets** (30 min., VHS). "...A Voluptuous Southern Belle. Her Anal Retentive Father. The Front Lawn Isn't Big Enough for All of Them." The series is "a comedic look at class struggle and conclusion jumping." *Love and Bullets*, Sullivision, 702 Bonham Ave., Wilmington, NC 28403; (910) 392-6153.

For her first documentary video, Iyalosa Osuntoki Mojisola decided to take on a goddess—albeit one with whom she is already deeply familiar, as a priestess serving her. **Osun: Her Worship, Her Powers** (30 min., VHS), shot in Nigeria, features a Yoruban river/fertility deity known as "Mother Goddess" in Nigeria. Documented are traditional song worship of Osun; related practices and philosophies; the elaborate annual festival in her honor; and the variety of ways in which Osun-worship altered as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. According to Mojisola, the project was conceived as a means of reconnecting people of African descent to their original spiritual lives. *Osun: Her Worship, Her Powers*, Osun Olomitutu Productions, 115-35 Dunkirk St., St. Albans, NY 11412; (718) 712-2842.

Sun, guns, the unyoung, thongs, Disney, mosquitoes. Florida conjures up many associations, though you'd be hard-pressed to include 'wetlands' among them. That's a problem. **Samsons Island** (30 min., video), a new documentary by Peggy and Robert Briel, chronicles the efforts of a community to restore a former wasteland to a pristine wetland. In 1954 the island was created from "dredge spoil" to control mosquitos. So it sat, plans to convert it into a park notwithstanding, until the ardor of the local citizenry was pumped up by a decision made by the City of Satellite Beach in 1990 to sell it. Massive grassroots action prevented the selloff, and has resulted in the exemplary reconstruction of a genuine wetland. Shot over two years, the doc was funded to the tune of 20 percent by the Environmental Protection Agency. *Samsons Island*, Savage Productions, Inc., 325 Fifth Ave., ste. 202, Indialantic, FL 32903; (407) 724-6443.

It's a hot rain gonna fall... Alex P. Michaels and Robert C. Banks, Jr. have concocted a "jazz romance in black and white," **The Hot Rain** (appr. 90 min., Hi8-to-16mm) based upon their

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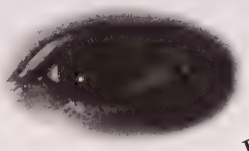
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one-act stage play of the same name. (Actually, the play was devised as a means of raising funds for the film—a devilish little trick.) Due for completion in early 1995, the film is a brew of alcoholism, rage, and despair as a bartender mourns his lover's untimely death and believes he caused her to die unhappy. *The Hot Rain*, Prelude Productions, Inc., 2847 Ambler St., Cleveland, OH 44104; (216) 491-9673.

Obssessive journal entries, clinical reports, and a pierced, bleeding brain: this is the stuff of **The Accursed Mazurka** (40 min., 16mm). In this hauntingly-titled experimental narrative, filmmaker Nina Fonoroff has wrought a disturbing vision of mental breakdown. "Instruments of electrical transmission are metaphors for the diseased brain, as reconstructed by a woman who has lost her reason, her body, and her foothold in personal identity," says the filmmaker. As the patient searches for clues regarding this momentary lapse of reason, she conjures up a memory—a 30-year-old home movie of her family dancing on their front lawn. "It is not for me to ransack scenes of the past for clues or explanations," she reflects. "Let these people dance in peace.... They have done nothing wrong.... There is no culpability to be found among these shadows." *The Accursed Mazurka*, Canyon Cinema, 2325 3rd St., ste. 338, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 626-2255.

CUE&A *with* NINA FONOROFF, director/producer, *The Accursed Mazurka*

Q: Is the film a personal record, a metaphoric memoir?
A: "Yes. In 1990 I was hospitalized for a year following a major depression. When I recovered, I took up the film I had begun to work on before, but everything changed. Everything was shattered by my experience.



From *The Accused Mazurka*, by Nina Fonoroff Courtesy filmmaker

Q: What was the original idea?
A: It was a film of wider scope. I wanted to explore modes of women's writing and autobiography, to see how they encompass different women's experiences. It was to have been an ambiguous narrative about women writing across the lines of self, writing the story of their own but also of each other's lives. I'm interested in the decentering of personal identity explored through writing and film.

Q: Did you sift through various strategies before arriving at the film's final form?
A: I considered a more straightforward approach, with interviews concerning the history of mental illness and its treatment, issues of hysteria. I ended up using footage shot over the years, not for any particular film. There were scenes of women writing that were rear-projected, or on different surfaces; there were images of hieroglyphics, of illegible writing. There were images that had been at my disposal since 1979.

Q: Did you draw on any previous writings specifically about the experience of mental illness?
A: Yes. There is a book, *Life Through Darkness*, by Henri Micheaux, that I used in the narration along with charts kept by doctors and nurses and my own journals. [Micheaux] wrote in the twenties and thirties, and had a lot to do with drug experience. He had a description of disembodiment resulting from insanity that articulated what I had been through. I read other things, about women and madness, but the political tenor of these works were not appropriate for my film.

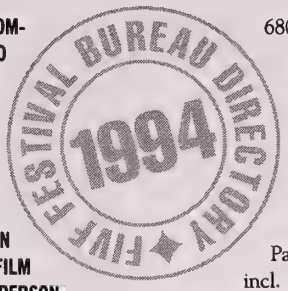
Q: Why not?
A: They tend to construct women's madness, "hysteria," as a means of empowerment, rebellion against society. That's [somewhat] valid, but didn't jibe with my experience. There's a certain amount of romanticization about madness. Being incarcerated, the physical sensations that come from being in that state of mind is an irreducible experience of which no analysis is possible.

The Accursed Mazurka *received a Jury Prize at the 1993 Black Maria Festival and has had screenings across the country at several major festivals and other venues for independent work, including New York's Millenium, the American Museum of the Moving Image, and the Museum of Modern Art; California's Pacific Film Archives and the San Francisco Cinémathèque.*

Nina Fonoroff has taught film at Amherst College, the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and, beginning in January, at the Massachusetts College of Art.

BY KATHRYN BOWSER

THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING TAPES OR PRINTS. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM AND VIDEOMAKERS TO CONTACT FIVF WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES.



Domestic

ACCESS AWARDS, February, CA. Awards competition open to public, educational & government access users & facilities. Award to best program in cats incl.: educational, government, community, comedy, int'l language, yearbook, sports, religious, pa/psa, environmental, minority, women, senior, youth, dance, music video, dramatic, talking heads, student, under $2,000. Tapes must not have been previously submitted, may be any length, cablecast anytime prior to deadline. Recipients must agree to pay acceptance fee to cover costs of their award; tapes non-returnable. Entry fee: $20; $5 add'l for late entry. Deadline: Jan. 30. Contact: Access Awards, 103 North Highway 101, #2010, Encinitas, CA 92024; (619) 753-5310.

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, March 14-19, MI. Now in 33rd yr., fest accepts entries in all cats & genres of ind. filmmaking, incl. doc, animation, experimental, narrative. Awards of $8,000 in cash prizes: 8 named awards totaling $6,250 & $1,750 at award jury's discretion. 4 hours of films tour colleges & film showplaces across US for 4 mos. following fest; rental fee of $1/min. per tour stop paid to participating filmmakers. Entry fee: $32. Format: 16mm; no video accepted for prescreening. Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Ann Arbor Film Festival, PO Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107; (313) 995-5356; fax: 5396.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May, CA. Sponsored by Visual Communications (VC), Asian Pacific American media arts center & UCLA Film & Television Archive, this fest, estab. in 1985, highlights cinematic expression by Asian Pacific American filmmakers & Asian/Pacific Rim int'l prods, w/ works by new & emerging film/videomakers as well as estab. makers. Entries should have themes involving, but not limited to, Asian Pacific American culture, history & experiences. Over 30 films showcased annually. Eligible films incl. shorts & features in cats of dramatic/narrative, doc, experimental, graphic film/animation & video. Fest has faced severe funding cuts & is looking for additional support to survive, in following ways: send donations to VC; send letters asking for contributions to VC from distribs currently enjoying commercial success from Asian films, eg. Miramax (*Farewell My Concubine*), Goldwyn (*Wedding Banquet*), Buena Vista (*Joy Luck Club*), Orion (*Raise the Red Lantern*). Fest entry fee: $10. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Jan. 20. Contact: Abe Ferrer, Asian Pacific American Int'l Film Festival, Visual Communications, 263 S. Los Angeles St., #307, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462; fax: (213) 687-4848.

BLACK FILMMAKERS HALL OF FAME INT'L BLACK INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION/ BLACK FILMWORKS, April 7, CA. Celebration of Black presence in American & world cinema. Black Filmworks award ceremony held at Paramount Theatre in Oakland. Fest incl. Eastman Kodak Workshop for Ind. Filmmakers, Children's Animation Workshop & Youth Symposium on Film & Video. Fest combines showcasing of winners from BFHFI's Int'l Black Independent Film & Video Competition w/ programming of important works by & about Black people from around world. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Dr. Beverly Robinson, Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, 405 14th St., ste. 515, Oakland, CA 94612; Mailing address: Box 28055, Oakland, CA 94604-8055; (510) 465-0804; fax: (510) 839-9858.

CAROLINA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 29-April 1, NC. Now in 5th yr at Univ. of NC-Greensboro, fest seeks to showcase works of ind. artistry & personal vision. All genres & cats accepted, incl. animation, doc, experimental & narrative, as well as works that fall outside lines of traditional categorization or cross boundaries between cats. Last yr. over 55 works were screened in competitive portion of fest. This yr's awards expected to match or exceed last yr's $2,500 in cash & film stock. Entry fee: $25 inds; $15 students. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Michael Frierson, Broadcasting Cinema Division, 100 Carmichael Bldg., UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27512-5001; (919) 334-5360.

METROPOLITAN FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 25-26, MI. Noncompetitive event for ind. films is one of Detroit's only film fests, taking place at 4 venues. Sponsored in part by Bravo Cable & TCI Cablevision. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 6. Contact: Gus Calandrino, Metropolitan Film Fest, 22010 Harper Ave., St. Clair Shores, MI 48080; (810) 779-07078 or (313) 527-1398.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS MEDIA AWARDS COMPETITION, April, MI. Annual competition to recognize outstanding videos on marriage & family topics. Competition cats: addiction/substance abuse, aging, contemporary social issues, families w/ special needs, family violence/abuse, human development, reproduction & family planning, marital & family issues, mental health/stress/transition/crisis management, parenting, sexuality, teen pregnancy, STD/AIDS, etc. Awards: 1st place, runner up, honorable mention. Format: 1/2". Entry fees: $72-$210, depending on length. Deadline: March 1. Contact: Francisco A. Villarruel, competition dir., Michigan State Univ./FCE/115 Human Ecology, East Lansing, MI 48824-1030.

NEW ENGLAND FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 11-13, MA. Co-presented by Arts Extension Service & Boston Film/Video Foundation. Ind. cat. open to New England residents only. Student cat. open to undergrad & grad students whose entries were completed while attending New England college/univ. or who are New England residents attending college elsewhere. Works must have been completed since 1993. Media works of all lengths eligible; dramatic/narrative, doc., animation & experimental genres accepted. No more than 2 works/artist. Up to $7,000 in cash & services awarded in ind. & student cats, w/ separate award distinctions for film & video. Entry fee: $30 ind.; $20 student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, all video formats. Deadline: Jan. 13 (ind.); Jan. 20 (students). Contact: Pam Korza, New England Film & Video Fest, Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Ed.; 604 Goodell Bldg., Univ. of MA, Amherst, MA 01003; (413) 545-2360.

NEW YORK LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL: THE NEW FESTIVAL, May, NY. Works of any length by & about lesbians & gay men accepted to fest, which welcomes work on multicultural & social issues & variety of different styles, incl. experimental film & video. Fest, founded in 1989, is one of largest of its kind. Entry fee: $10 for return s&h. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on VHS. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Programming Committee, The New Fest, 462 Broadway, Ste. 510, NY, NY 10013; (212) 343-2707; fax: 0629.

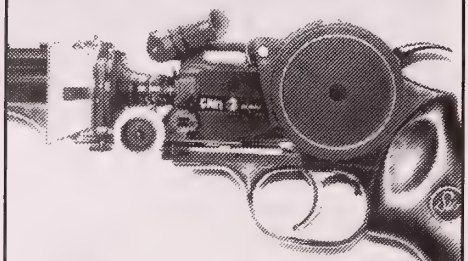
NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, NY. 2nd yr of "off-beat" competitive fest showcasing films & filmmakers who "aren't afraid to make some waves." Fest accepts film/video, shorts & features, incl. docs, narrative, animation, experimental & (new this yr.) multimedia. All formats accepted; preview on 1/2" & CD-ROM. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: late January. Contact: Todd Phillips, NY Underground Film Fest, 225 Lafayette St., ste. 605, NY, NY 10012; (212) 925-3440; fax: 3430.,

PHILADELPHIA FESTIVAL OF WORLD CINEMA, May 3-14, PA. Produced by International House, annual citywide, 12-day celebration features premiere screenings of int'l & American ind. prods, tributes, workshops, forums, parties & cine-cafés. Fest is noncompetitive & mostly curated. Special events incl. Fest of Independents (showcase of works by Philadelphia-based film/video makers) & "Set in Philadelphia" screenwriting competition (open to screenwriters who submit original, feature-length screenplays set in Greater Philadelphia metro area). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Deadline: Jan. 16 (postmark). For film/video entry forms, send SASE to: Open Call, Philadelphia Fest of World Cinema, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6593; fax: 6562.

RETIREMENT RESEARCH FOUNDATION NATIONAL MEDIA OWL AWARDS, May 17, IL. Competitive fest for outstanding films, video & TV series "that address aging issues, capture images of older persons & illuminate challenge & promise of an aging society." Cats: ind. films, TV non-fiction, training/educational, & theatrical films. Awards: 1st prize $5,000 & bronze statuette; 2nd prize $2,000 & plaque; honorable mentions $1,000 & plaques; community video award (TV non-fiction only) $2,000 & statuette. Entries must have been produced in US & released or initially televised/copyrighted during 1994. Formats: 16mm (video transfer), 3/4", VHS-SP. No entry fee. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Ray Bradford, project dir., Nat'l Media Owl Awards, Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 951-6868.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June, CA. Large int'l lesbian &

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gay media arts event boasts audiences of over 53,000 (incl. many int'l guests & large number of programmers & distributors) & over 100 programs at several venues throughout SF, incl. signature venue Castro Theatre. Fest is "committed to showcasing best & most diverse work by or about lesbians & gay men." Fest encourages appls from women & people of color. Presented by Frameline, nonprofit organization dedicated to exhibition, distribution, funding & promotion of lesbian & gay media arts. Deadline: Feb. 15; late entry: Feb. 28 (late fee applies). Contact: Frameline, San Francico Int'l Lesbian & Gay Film Fest, 346 Ninth St., SF, CA 94103; (415) 703-8658; fax: (415) 861-1404.

SOUTH BEACH FILM FESTIVAL, June, FL. 2nd annual film/video competition for ind. shorts & features dedicated "to presenting innovative & unusual American ind. films & videos to South Florida audiences in a South Beach venue." Cats: experimental, ficton, non-fiction, animation. Cash prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners in each cat. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Rob Mills, South Beach Film Fest, 20161 NE 16th Pl., North Miami Beach, FL 33179; (305) 448-9133.

Foreign

CINEMA DU REEL INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY & SOCIAL DOCUMENTATION, March 10-19, France. Now in 17th yr & 1 of major int'l fests focusing on visual anthropology, fest accepts film in following sections: int'l competition, French panorama, non-competitive program, & special screenings. Full-length & shorts eligible. Films in prod. may be submitted. Works must have been completed between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31 & must not have been submitted for selection for previous fest. Int'l jury awards in int'l competition: Grand Prix (50,000FF), Short Film Prize (15,000FF), Joris Ivens Prize (15,000FF). Jury of librarians & professionals award Libraries Prize (30,000FF) w/in int'l competitive section or French panorama (only films w/ French subtitles or in French eligible for this prize). Foreign Affairs Ministry awards Louis Marcorelles Prize. Multimedia Author's Society awards SCAM Prize (30,000FF) to foreign film w/in int'l competition. Entries must not have been released in France, must not have been released commercially, must not have been broadcast on any French TV channel & must not have been awarded prize at int'l competition. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Hi8 video. Deadline: Dec. 31 for receipt of cassettes; send detailed info ASAP & entry forms will be forwarded. Contact: Suzette Glenadel, Cinema du Reel, Bibliotheque Publicque D'Information, Centre Georges Pompidou, 19, rue Beaubourg 75197, Paris Cedex 04, France; tel: 011 33 1 44 78 12 33; fax: 011 33 1 44 78 12 24.

GOTHENBERG FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 3-12, Sweden. Oldest & largest fest in Scandinavia attracts makers, distributors, press. Shows 200 films at 5 theaters. Showcases ind. fiction, docs, shorts. Screenings on video will take place in NY in mid-Dec. Fest rep will evaluate films. Invitations will be finalized w/in 2 wks after screenings. Fees: 1-time, non-refundable servicing fee for features (fiction & doc) $35; shorts (fiction & doc) $25; student films (shorts only) $15. Deadline: Dec. 12. For appl., contact: Sandy Mandelberger, International Media Resources, 599

Broadway, 8th fl., NY, NY 10012-3235; (212) 941-1464; fax: (212) 431-0329.

INTERNATIONAL MONITOR AWARDS, Oct., NY. Worldwide competition annually recognizes excellence in all areas of electronic prod. & postprod. Judging held in major cities worldwide. Awards announced at banquet in NYC. Winning entries placed in permanent collection of NYC's Museum of TV & Radio. Awards sponsored by Int'l Teleproduction Society. Cats: doc, shorts, commercials, developmental/experimental animation, TV series/specials, nonbroadcast, childrens, sports, features, show reels, promos, music videos. Formats: 3/4", D2. Fees: $150/$170. Deadline: Early Feb. Contact: Julia Hammer, Int'l Monitor Awards, ITS, 350 Fifth Ave., ste. 2400, NY, NY 10118; (212) 629-3266; fax: 3265.

OBERHAUSEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, Germany. Competitive fest, major stop on int'l short fest circuit, is now celebrating 41st edition. Oberhausen annually showcases innovative ind. & experimental short films of all genres under theme "Way to the Neighbor." Social, doc, new developments in animation, experimental & short features, student films, first films & works from throughout world programmed. Entries should be German premieres produced after Jan. 1, 1993, w/ running time up to 35 min. & not submitted for selection in previous yrs. Int'l competition also accepts video. Special programs: Works of Jonas Mekas. Awards: Grand Prize (10,000DM); 2 Principal Prizes (5,000DM); special prizes (1,000-5,000DM); Alexander Scotti Prize to best film on old age & death (2,000DM); Best Film on Educational Politics (5,000); Fipresci Prize (2,000DM); Interfilm Prize (2,000DM). Fest also incl. Filmotheque of Youth & Childlren's Cinema, which awards prize of 3,000DM, decided by children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4; 1/2"; preview mainly on cassette. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Angela Haardt, fest director, Int'l Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, PO Box 101505, D-46042 Oberhausen, Germany; tel: 011 49 208 807 008; fax: 011 49 208 825-5413. New address (Jan. 95) grillostr. 34.

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL, June 9-24, Australia. Over 40 years old, FIAPF-recognized fest is one of world's oldest & leading int'l showcases for new work. Noncompetitive int'l program mixes features, shorts, docs & retros w/ selection of films from several countries. Fest annually shows about 75 features & 100 shorts & docs. Many selected films are shared w/ Melbourne Film Fest. Australian distributors, programmers, & TV buyers attend; fest is excellent opportunity for access to Australian markets. Extensive press coverage; fest also conducts audience survey. Entries musts be Australian premieres, completed in previous 18 mos. FIVF will again act as liaison w/ Sydney this yr, collecting & organizing films for prescreening by fest director Paul Byrnes, who will visit NY early next yr. Fest pays r/t group shipping of selected films. Entry/handling fee: $25 AIVF members; $30 nonmembers, payable to FIVF. Fest formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm & video; preview on 1/2" or 3/4" only. Deadline at FIVF: Jan. 15. For info. & appls, send SASE or contact: Pamela Calvert, FIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012: (212) 473-3400. Deadline in Sydney: Mar. 15. Fest address: Paul Byrnes, fest dir., Sydney Film Fest Box 950, Glebe NSW 2037, Australia; tel: 011 61 2 660-3844; fax: 011 61 2 692-8793.

1995 UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM+VIDEO FESTIVAL-7th Annual!!

Friday, February 10, 1995
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
ENTRY DEADLINE: January 20, 1995

Open to any genre (animation, documentary, fiction, experimental, personal, etc.), but work must have originated on Super 8mm film or 8mm video. Works post-produced on video are welcome. Judges award $1000 in cash and prizes. Entry Fee = $25.
For Information /Entry Forms Contact: Al Nigrin, Director, 1995 U.S. Super 8mm Film/Video Festival, Rutgers Film Co-op, Rutgers University, 43 Mine Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903 (908) 932-8482; (908) 932-1935 FAX



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Distribution

AFFABLE DISTRIBUTOR & AIVF member seeks quality ind. prods for exclusive worldwide distribution. If program is accepted, we will send contract in 7 days. Send VHS w/ SASE to Chip Taylor Communications, 15 Spollett Dr., Derry, NH 03038.

AQUARIUS PRODUCTIONS seeks videos on learning disabilities, special ed., holistic medicine & coping w/ chronic diseases, among other topics. Call/send videos for preview. Contact: Leslie Kussman, Aquarius, 35 Main St., Wayland, MA 01778; (508) 651-2963.

ASIA: Group Asia, Inc., has offices in major countries; seeks all types of programming for distribution in Asia. Call/send VHS copies to: Group Asia, PO Box 93, Shawnee, PA 18356; (717) 421-6513. Incl. SASE for tape return.

ATA TRADING CORP., actively & successfully distributing ind. prods. for over 50 yrs., seeks new programming of all types for worldwide distribution into all markets. Contact us at (212) 594-6460.

CINNAMON PRODUCTIONS, 25 yrs. distributing educational, home video & TV worldwide, seeks films/videos on social/minority concerns, human rights, environment, AIDS, Native Americans, drugs, arts. 19 Wild Rose Rd., Westport, CT 06880; (203) 221-0613.

ECLECTIC ENTERTAINMENT CO., worldwide distribution for your "cutting-edge" art house or mainstream feature films. Send tapes to: 8033 Sunset Blvd., ste. 474, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 466-0801; fax: 5980.

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS, distributor of award-winning film & video on disabilities, health care, mental health, family/social issues, etc. seeks new work for distribution to educational markets. Karen McMillen. Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

FREE CATALOG of ind. & experimental films on video. Call 1 (800) 797-FILM or write to: Alternative Filmworks, Inc., Dept. 101, PO Box 620, State College, PA 16804-0620.

QUEER CINEMA WANTED by OutSpoken Prod. (worldwide rep for Pat Rocco film library). Short-/medium-length film/video pieces from gay/lesbian POV. In prod. now! TV & home video releases: We can get your work seen! Call Steve (800) 670-9282.

SEEKING EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS on guidance issues such as violence/drug prevention/parenting for exclusive distribution. Aggressive marketing produces unequaled results. Bureau For At-Risk Youth, 645 New York Ave., Huntington, NY 11743; (800) 99-YOUTH.

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VARIED DIRECTIONS INT'L, distributors of socially important, award-winning programs on child abuse, health & women's issues, seeks select films & videos. Call Joyce at (800) 888-5236 or write: 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843; fax: (207) 236-4512.

Freelancers

16MM PROD. PKG. w/ cinematographer from $200/day. Crystal-sync camera w/ fluid head, Nagra, mikes, Mole/Lowell lights, dolly/track, etc. 16mm post avail.: editing, sound transfer 1/4" to 16 mag (.055/ft). Sound mix $70/hr! Tom (201) 933-6698.

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ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" columns in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development through distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact: Robert L. Seigel Esq. (212) 307-7533.

ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER: Former AIVF exec. director & founding chair of ITVS has returned to legal practice. Have your project represented by lawyer w/ in-depth understanding of ind. prod., financing, distribution & public TV. Reasonable rates. Call Lawrence Sapadin (718) 768-4142.

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FILM & TV JOBS: Nat'l listings. Professional, technical & prod. Published 2x/mo. 6 issues/$35, 12/$60, 22/$95. Send check/m.o.: Entertainment Employment Journal, 7095 Hollywood Blvd. #815, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 969-8500.

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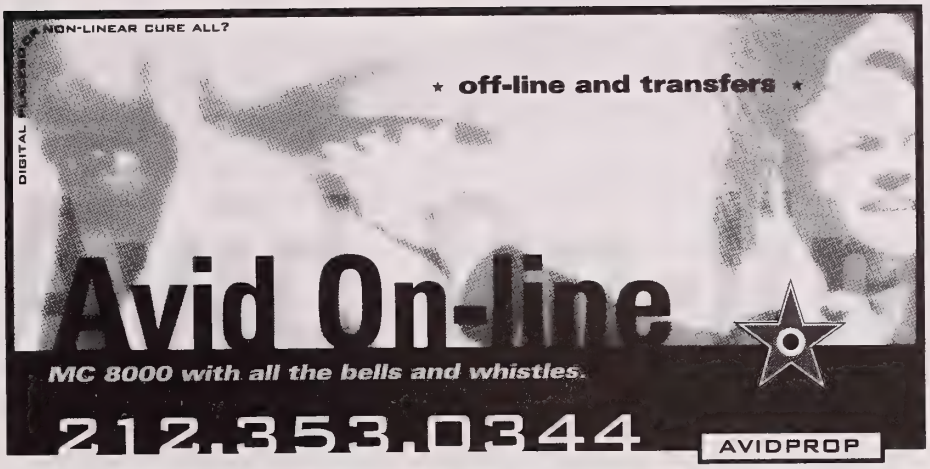
EXEC. PRODUCER seeks projects for features & docs w/ copyrighted scripts. Please send SASE to: Tudor Prods., 409 Washington St., Hoboken, NJ 07030.

FORTY ACRES AND A MULE Filmworks, Inc., is accepting WGA-registered, feature-length screenplays. Please send script & script-sized SASE to: Forty Acres and a Mule Development, 8 St. Felix St., Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 858-9620.

IND. PROD. COMPANY seeks scripts under 15 min. All genres considered. Send copyrighted scripts w/ SASE to: Ndolo Films, PO Box 20210, NY, NY 10009.

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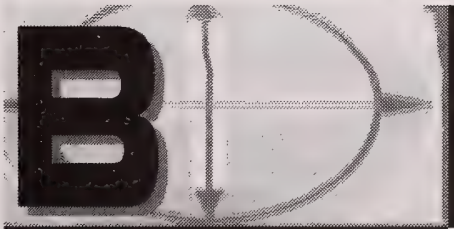
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SCREENPLAY CONTESTS (35) offer $1.4 million in cash, publicity, rep., fellowships, etc. Don't ignore this route to success. For info on comprehensive screenplay contest book: Writer's Aide, 1685 S. Colorado Blvd., Box 237-C, Denver, CO 80222.

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NOTICES ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE. AIVF MEMBERS & NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE FIRST PRIORITY; OTHERS ARE INCLUDED AS SPACE PERMITS. *THE INDEPENDENT* RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH. DEADLINES FOR NOTICES ARE THE 1ST OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (JANUARY 2 FOR MARCH 1995 ISSUE.) SEND TO: INDEPENDENT NOTICES, FIVF, 625 BROADWAY, NY, NY 10012. WE TRY TO BE AS CURRENT AS POSSIBLE WITH INFORMATION, BUT PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK WITH ORGANIZATIONS BEFORE SUBMITTING TAPES OR APPLICATIONS.

Conferences • Seminars

DCTV offers technical workshops, incl.: Basic TV Prod., Camera Seminar, S-VHS & 3/4" Editing, AMIGA Titling & Graphics, Intro. to Doc. Register by sending $10 down payment to: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: John McGeehan (212) 431-1130.

SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE holds extension education classes in fine art filmmaking. For more info or to register, call: (415) 749-5554.

SHOW BIZ EXPO EAST takes place Jan. 5 to 7 at New York Hilton & Towers. Expo will feature latest trends in entertainment prod. & postprod. More than 9,500 prod. professionals & 250 exhibitors attending. AIVF has limited number of free passes avail. for its members. If you're interested in attending, plz stop by AIVF's offices at 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012. Membership ID must be presented to receive pass.

UC SANTA CRUZ EXTENSION PROGRAM offers certificates in graphic design & visual communication. For more info or to register, call: (408) 427-6660.

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90's CHANNEL, embracing controversy & searching for programming that offers fresh approaches to TV, welcomes tapes for submission. Topics that have run on 90's Channel incl.: Racism, (*Framing the Panthers in Black and White*); Jewish/Palestinian issues (*We Dare to Speak*); sexuality issues & programs on reproductive rights. Send 3/4" tapes to: The 90's Channel, 2010 14th St., #209; Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, résumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

ARTISTS' CD(ROM) EXHIBITION, int'l exhibition of work by artists using CD-ROM, is proposed for Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Sydney, Australia in mid-1995. Seeking innovative presentations by artists using CD-ROM, of work in variety of media (eg., photography, video, slide). Artists requested to submit work for consideration; *no* original materials, please. Also interested in receiving info about discs planned for completion by early 1995. Institutions & writers welcome to send info about works by artists using CD-ROM that they consider to be of interest to curators. Deadline for submissions: Feb. 17. Send inquiries & material to: Mike Leggett; Artists' CD (ROM) Exhibition, c/o Museum of Contemporary Art, PO Box R1286; Sydney 2000 Australia.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 Ninth St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest, (404) 231-4846.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o *Screen*, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 pm. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" OK. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CELEBRATED CUCARACHA THEATER seeks 16mm films for series of Tues. night screenings in Jan. & Feb. 1995. Send 1/2" tapes to Chris Oldcorn/Janet Paparazzo, c/o Cucaracha, 500 Greenwich Street, NY, NY 10013.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CINEWOMEN SCREENING SERIES will showcase works of women filmmakers in ind. film community & is now accepting completed works on film & video for LA screenings. Please submit work on VHS tape by Jan. 14 along w/ $10 check made payable to: Cinewomen, 9903 Santa Monica Blvd., ste 461, Beverly Hills, CA 90212. (310) 855-8720. SASE for tape return.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Al Johnston, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call: (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

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series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Anything goes. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on the aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) made by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have a chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 West End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., non-profit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 West Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show, seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph or two about artist & their work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 East Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

INT'L SCHOOL OF FILM & TELEVISION, created in 1986 as non-governmental institute by Gabriel Garcia Marquez Foundation for the New Latin American Cinema, is compiling audiovisual material produced in film schools based on, or inspired by, work of Nobel Prize founder. Send all info avail. by students from film or TV schools based on the work of Marquez, regardless of its place & date of prod., format & license clearance status. If possible, send VHS video (NTSC or PAL) of those projects produced by your school or avail. at your video library. For details, contact Lisandro Duque, fax: (537) 33 51 96; 33 53 41; e-mail: eictv@ceniai.cu

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. A VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113

MYPHEDUH FILMS, INC., nat'l distributors of *Sankofa*, is seeking new Black independent films to showcase in its Black Preview Sunday series at the Thalia Theater in New York City. Student productions welcome. Submissions may be of any length and genre. For further info, contact: Kathryn Bowser, Mypheduh Films, 100 E. 17th St., NY, NY 10003; (212) 505-1770; fax:(212) 505-1670.

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYC-AREA TV PRODUCER is creating TV pilot about ind. filmmakers & is seeking filmmakers w/ current or upcoming projects to be featured in pilot. Call Paul Mulcahy (212) 865-7462.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington

Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in S-VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, regional public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME AT P.S.122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S.122, 150 First Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatamala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 South Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION welcomes work of film/video artists for 1994-95 Southern Circuit tour of 6 artists to travel 10 days to 8 southern sites & present 1 show per city. No appl. form required. Submit VHS, 3/4" or 16mm film program of approximately 1-hr. in length (can be cued for 30 min. section for judging purposes) in addition to résumé & publicity. Submission déadline: Jan. 16. Send material to: South Carolina Arts Commission, Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais Street, Columbia, SC 29201. Attn: Felicia Smith or Susan Leonard; (803) 734-8696.

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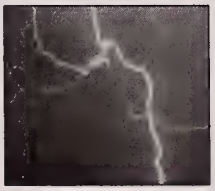
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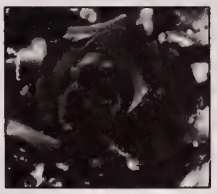


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SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres/any medium/1 to 60 min. long. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit now to: EDGE Television, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SHORT FILMS WANTED for *Twilight Zone*-type anthology series. Looking for short (up to 30 mins.) films in color, covering suspense, thriller, fantasy, science fiction, action/adventure & light horror. Prefer strong narrative films w/ plots twists & surprise endings. For more info, call (310) 396-3115.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Makiko Ito, Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE NEWZ, half-hour, late-night comedy TV show based on topical news events, is actively seeking submissions. Footage will be showcased on national series. Formats: D2, Beta SP, Beta, 3/4", SVHS, VHS, or Hi8. Cats: News-style stock shots (skylines, panoramas, local landmarks, local sports icons, etc.) & comedic shots. Must include signed submissions release for stock footage. For info or release form, contact: The Newz Submission Line (407) 354-6590.

TV POLONIA is looking for entertainment, family, sports, drama & reality programming to fill cable TV channel sent to Poland in English w/ Polish translations. For more info, send SASE to Stefani Kelly, Southfield Park Tower 1 #700, 12835 E. Arapahoe Rd., Englewood, CO 80112.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, Manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of

permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 365-8350.

WYBE-TV35, Philadelphia's ind. public TV station, seeks work for series featuring film & video from ind. media artists from around nation. This 10-hour, 10-week series airs in weekly prime-time slot each Spring. All styles welcome. Shorts up to 30 minutes are preferred. Acquisition fee: $25 per minute. Deadline for submissions: Jan. 18. Entry forms: Through the Lens 5, WYBE-TV35, 6070 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19128; (215) 483-3900; fax: 6908.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new prime-time series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under one hour; completed; all rights cleared. Pays $35/min. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

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ASSISTANT PROFESSOR (tenure track) in video prod. to begin Aug. 1995. Send vitae, 3 letters of recomm. & samples of creative/scholarly work by Dec. 1 to: M.A. Fitzpatrick, Comm. Arts, UW-Madison, Madison, WI 53706. EOE/AA. Finalists cannot be guaranteed confidentiality.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR/LECTURER to teach all levels of film & video/doc. prod. Tenure track if assistant prof., non-tenure if lecturer. Position requires demonstrated ability & exp. in film/video prod. & evidence of strong teaching abilities. Commitment to building new program in dynamic Central Florida film industry. Candidate must engage in research/creative activity. Begin Aug. 1; send résumé, 3 letters of recco & samples of prod. to: Dr. Rick Blum, Film Production Search Committee, Motion Picture Division, School of Communication, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FLA 32816-1344. Prog. is highly selective & maintains close working relationship w/ Disney/MGM, Universal, & other professional prod. facilities. Appls received by Jan. 20 will receive priority consideration. UCF is EEO/Affirmative Action employer.

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer; c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

FILM/VIDEO CHAIRPERSON needed for 25-year-old BA/MFA Film/Video department at Columbia College in Chicago. Appls & nominations now being accepted for position avail. June 1. Requirements are: substantial experience in film/video prod.; commitment to film education; budgetary & fund raising skills; knowledge of new & traditional techniques; ability to develop relationships in industry & extensive administrative abilities. Competitive salary & excellent benefits. Minority & women applicants encouraged to apply. Submit résumé & statement of teaching philosophy (no phone calls please) to: Film/Video Chair Search, Human Resources Department, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335; fax: -9337.

Publications

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is thorough volume of data of value to any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send $29.95 to Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

ANIMATION JOURNAL, peer-reviewed scholarly journal devoted to animation history/theory, welcomes submissions. Manuscripts should be double-spaced, following *Chicago Manual of Style*. Papers are blind-referred, so author's name should not appear on body of manuscript, only on attached cover sheet. Send 2 copies, 1 hard (paper) copy & 1 copy on computer disk, preferably Mac in Microsoft Word file. Send SASE for returns. Deadlines: Jan. 15 for fall issue & July 1 for spring issue. For more info, call or fax (714) 544-6255, or write: Dr. Maureen Furniss, Editor, AJ Press, 2011 Kingsboro Circle, Tustin, CA 92680-6733. e-mail address: maureen@aol.com.

CALL FOR PAPERS: anthology of critical essays concerning video/film prod. is being compiled. Purpose of text is to provide alternative source of info from traditional prod. textbooks, which tend to be equipment-oriented. Focus will be on think pieces covering wide range of aesthetic, analytical & critical/cultural concerns that will benefit students in

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prod. work. Submit manuscripts or extended abstracts in triplicate by Dec. 15 to: Kathryn Lasky, Dept. of Communication, University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME 01403; (202) 780-5031; fax: -5739.

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Resources • Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE is accepting entries for 1994 Robert Bennett Award recognizing excellence in local TV programming. Entries must be at least 30 min., aired in US between July 1 & Sept. 30, 1993, produced by local station or ind. & telecast in local market. For appls & guidelines, write: The Robert M. Bennett Award, c/o AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027-1625; (213) 856-7787.

ARTS MIDWEST, in cooperation w/ NEA, is accepting appls. for visual arts funding. $1,000 matching grants avail. to organizations through Artworks Fund & $5,000 grants to individuals through the AM/NEA Regional Visual Artist Fellowships. For info, contact: Bobbi Morris at (612) 341-0755.

CAROL FIELDING GRANTS for students in film or video. $4,000 for prod.; $1,000 for research. University Film and Video Assoc. (UFVA) & University Film and Video Foundation (UFVF) offer grants for student projects. Must be undergrad or grad student & must be sponsored by faculty member who is active member of UFVA. Deadline for appl.: Jan. 15. Awards announced by March 31. Send 3 copies of résumé w/ social security number; 1-pg. description of project incl. statement of purpose, indication of resources avail. & summary of prod. or research project; statement by sponsoring UFVA member indicating willingness to serve as supervisor; 1-pg. budget, indicating what portion of project will be supported by grant. For narrative prods., incl. copy of script (up to 30 min.); for docs, incl. short treatment (limit 1 hr.). For experimental or animated, inc. treatment &/or storyboard. For research projects, incl. description of methodology to be employed & statement indicating relationship of proposed study to previous research in field. Send to: J. Stephen Hank, Dept. of Drama & Communications, U. of New Orleans, Lakefront, New Orleans, LA 70148.

CENTER FOR MEDIA, CULTURE AND HISTORY AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY announces Rockefeller Humanities Fellowships. Scholars, media makers & cultural activists invited to apply for 1- or 2-semester residencies to develop projects on how social movements & countercultural communities, past & present, have used film, video & TV to forge collective identities around issues such as AIDS, labor, feminism, ecology, & the rights of gay men & lesbians. Deadline: Jan. 20. Contact: Barbara Abrash or Faye Ginsburg, NYU Center for Media, Culture & History, 25 Waverly Place, NY, NY 10003; (212) 998-3759.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO & FILMMAKERS

Diverse, committed, opinionated, and FIERCELY INDEPENDENT—these are the video and filmmakers who make up the national membership of AIVF. Documentary and feature filmmakers, animators, experimentalist, distributors, educators, students, curators—all concerned that their work make a difference—find the **Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers**, the national service organization for independent media producers, vital to their professional lives. Whether it's our monthly magazine, ***The Independent***, or the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while letting you know **you're not alone.**

AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. ***JOIN AIVF TODAY!***

Here's what AIVF membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals*—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with a festival consultant for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country, call the office for the one nearest you. *Plus*, members are carrying on an active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information in person or on the phone about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs.
Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

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Year's subscription to *The Independent* • Access to all plans and discounts • Festival/Distribution/Library services • Information Services • Discounted admission to seminars • Book discounts • Advocacy action alerts • Eligibility to vote and run for board of directors

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Foreign Surface Rates
(includes Canada & Mexico)

- ❑ $40/student (enclose copy of student ID)
- ❑ $60/individual
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CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving their writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining a writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 9th St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for $500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER is now accepting appls. for its 5-day, video image processing residency program. Must have previous experience in video prod.; all genres welcome. Appls. must incl. resume, video of recent work (3/4" or VHS), SASE & project description indicating how image processing is integrated into work. Deadline: Dec. 15. For more info, contact: Experimental TV Center, 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

FUNDING EXCHANGE's Paul Robeson Fund for Ind. Media's accepts appls. for doc film & video projects in preprod. or distribution stages only. Deadline: Dec. 1. Grant decisions will be announced by March 30, 1995. Projects must address critical political & social issues, have highly developed distribution initiative & have ability to be used for political advocacy &/or organizing purposes. Producers utilizing alternative forms of social issue doc making are encouraged to apply. Appls will not be faxed. Write or call: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

INSTITUTE OF NOETIC SCIENCES, thru gift from Hartley Film foundation, will grant $10,000 for prod. of film or video addressing topics of relevance to Institute interests (incl. consciousness research, healing, death & dying, sustainable development, etc.). Appl. deadline: March 1. Call or write: IONS, 475 Gate Five Rd., #300, Sausalito, CA 94965; (415) 331-5650.

GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY AWARDS, recognizing distinguished achievement & meritorious public service by radio & TV networks, producing orgs, cable TV orgs, & individuals, welcomes entries. TV submissions must be on first gen. 3/4" U-matic w/o visible time-code window. Also submit 1/2" VHS copy per entry for judging. Each TV entry must be submitted in North American NTSC standard, w/ protective case & entry fee of $125 in U.S. currency. Deadline: Jan. 13. For details call Barry Sherman at (706) 542-3787; fax: -9273.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 5th Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

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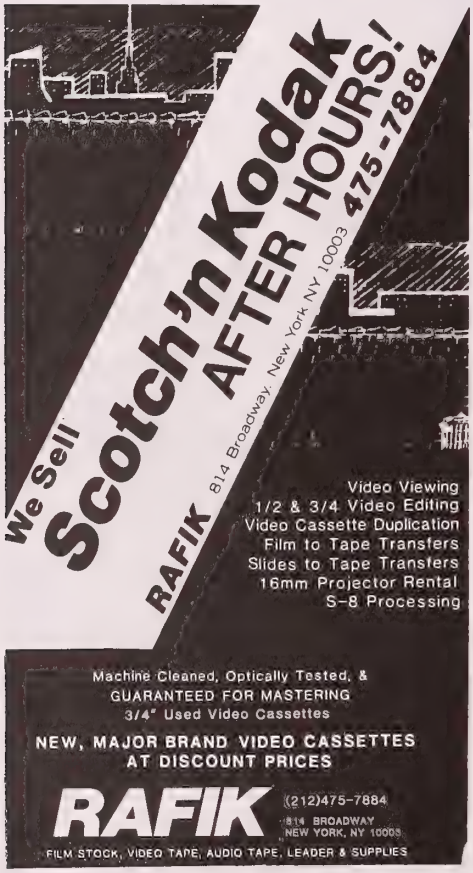
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MACDOWELL COLONY seeks film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artist community in Petersborough, NH. Deadlines: Jan. 15 (May-Aug. session), April 15 (Sept.-Dec.), Sept. 15 (Jan.-April). Ability to pay not factor for acceptance. Ltd. travel grants avail. Write or call for info, appl.: MacDowell Colony, 100 High St., Peterborough, NH 03458; (603) 924-3886.

NATIONAL WRITERS WORKSHOP is accepting screenplays for annual screenwriting contest from ethnic minorities w/in L.A. & across US. The Ethnic Minority Screenwriters Development & Promotional Program offers $500 scholarship per winning screenplay, plus exposure to agents, studios, producers & directors. Deadline: Dec. 16. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ .52 postage to: National Writers Workshop/Ethnic Minority Contest, P.O. Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS is accepting grant appls for TV & radio grants. Deadline: Dec. 10. For more info, contact: NEA, The Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 682-5452.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES, applications for Humanities Projects in Media grants due March 1995 for projects beginning after October 1, 1995 or Sept. 1995 for projects beginning after April 1, 1996. For appls & info, contact: NEH, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, Rm 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of the last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION announces start of awards program recognizing outstanding work in oral history in several cats. In 1995, award will be made for nonprint format production, incl. film, video, radio program or series, exhibition, or drama that makes significant use of oral history to interpret historical subject. Deadline: April 1. For more info, write: Jan Dodson Barnhart, executive secretary, Oral History Association, Box 3968, Albuquerque, NM 87190-3968.

PEN/*NEWMAN'S OWN* FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD of $25,000 & a limited edition artwork goes to a US resident "who has fought courageously, despite advertisity, to safeguard the 1st Amendment right to freedom of expression as it applies to the written word." Deadline: Jan. 10. For info & appl, contact: Karen Hwa, PEN/*Newman's Own* First Amendment Award, PEN American Ctr, 568

Broadway, NY, NY 10012; (212) 334-1660.

PENNYSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites appls for 1995-96 scholars-in-residence program. Provides support for f/t research study at any of facilities maintained by Commission for 4 to 12 consecutive weeks between May 1 & April 30, 1996 at rate of $1,200/mo. Program open to college & university affiliated scholars, incl. grad students, ind. researchers, public-sector professionals, writers & others. Deadline: Jan. 20. For info, contact: Division of History, PA Historical & Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, director of Grants Programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

SOUTHERN HUMANITIES MEDIA FUND is accepting grant proposals for film/video prods of American South from nonprofit organizations chartered in AL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA & W. VA. Deadline: March 6. For appls & info, contact: The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities & Public Policy, 145 Ednam Dr., Charlottesville, VA 22903-4629; (804) 924-3296.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media arists should contact Arts International for 1994 appls. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

UTAH ARTS COUNCIL offers grants to encourage development, to support realization of specific artistic ideas & to recognize significant contribution artists make to creative environment of Utah. Deadline: Feb. 1. For info, contact: Tey Haines, Utah Arts Council, 617 E. South Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84102-1177; (801) 533-5895.

VSW's MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits are awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPWRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive $500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. This program continues throughout the year. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 52¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, The Writers Workshop National Contest, P.O.Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), is supported in part by The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We are also grateful to the following individuals who have made contributions to FIVF from January 1 - September 15, 1994:

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Continued on p. 54

IVERSARY CELEBRATION
rn Art and The Manhattan Club



"In its 20 years of serving and representing independents, AIVF has never been afraid to be on the frontlines of important battles affecting the life of the field. While it may not have won every battle, it has been dauntless in its efforts to create new opportunities for independents."

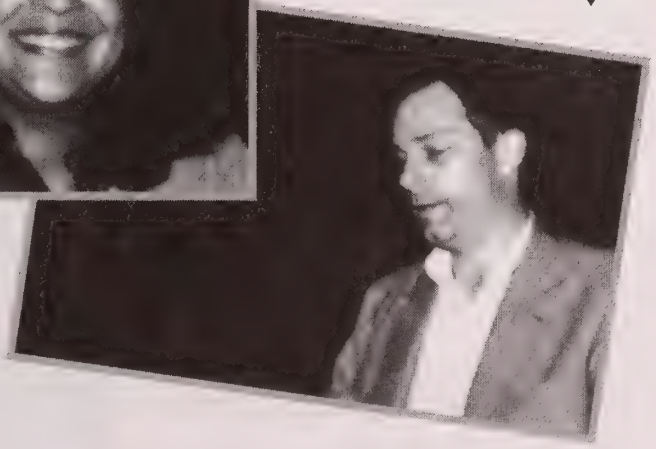
Ruby Lerner, AIVF executive director





▲ Nora Jacobson, *P.O.V.*'s Ellen Schneider, and First Run Features' Susan Glatzer.

Whit Stillman (*Barcelona*) fits in an appearance before his mad dash to FedEx. ▼



▲ Shu Lea Cheang (*Fresh Kill*) and EVC's Michele Mattere get happy.

▲ Former AIVF board member Skip Blumberg imitates Uma Thurman while ITVS's David Liu and videomaker Catherine Saalfield watch the birdie.



▶ *Just Another Girl on the IRT* director Leslie Harris: "I had the opportunity to grow and explore new ideas without someone telling me what wouldn't work."

▼ Julia Reichert (*Emma & Elvis*): "Some of us in our generation now realize that we are becoming elders. That it's our turn to reach a hand out to people younger than us...with voices distinct from ours."





▶ Chris Hegedus & D.A. Pennebaker (*The War Room*): "A little bit of money for an independent is like drink for an alcoholic."



▲ DeeDee Halleck and Loni Ding, AIVF board members past and present.



▶ MC James Schamus

Supporters: continued from p. 52

deProsse, Karen Erskine, Russell R. Fowler, Robert I. Freedman, Robert E. Frye, Barbara Hammer, Joseph Handley, Robert Hansmann, Kathleen Hulser, Allison Humenuk, Gary Johnson, Kartemquin Films, Bill Kern, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Lillian Jimenez, George King, James Klein, Debra Kozee, Ruby Lerner, David W. Lynch, Alexander Marshall, Joseph M. McCarthy, Julia Meltzer, J. Philip Miller, Joyce Miller, Robb Moss, Gary Natoli, Jason Powell, Marilyn Ries, Ira Sachs, Deborah Shaffer, Robert L. Seigel, Derek Shirae, William J. Sloan, Robert Spencer, Russell A. Thomas, Gabriel A. Tolliver, Michael F. Tomasso, Nicole Tostevin, Francesca Verri, Barton Weiss, Sarah Whitten, Sue Williams, Joseph Windgradoff, Chuck Workman, Erica C. Worthem, Pamela Yates, Debra Zimmerman (list current as of 9/30/94)

AIVF/FIVF thanks all its contributors—past and present. Your financial support, over and above your membership dues, helps ensure the vitality of FIVF's programs and services.

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Contributions can be sent to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. Checks should be payable to FIVF. Thank you for your support!

Memoranda: continued from p. 56

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Ripples of Change: Japanese Women's Search for Self, produced and directed by **Nanako Kurihara**, won the Gold Apple in Multicultural Issues at the 1994 National Educational Film and Video Festival and a certificate of merit at the San Francisco International Film Festival. It had its Japanese premiere at the Tokyo International Film Festival and will be broadcast as part of the PBS series *Women's Voices*.

Thomas Lenz of Buffalo, NY received a grant from Upstate Media Regrant, a program funded through the New York State Council on the Arts. His show, *Toxic TV*, is about environmental issues.

New York-based producer and writer **Jill Petzall** won the Hometown USA first prize for producing *Rule of Thumb*, a video concerning the legal rights of abused women. The 25-min. doc was awarded the Best Social Service Documentary Public Access Broadcast of the year.

Renaissance, coproduced by **Bill Jersey** and **Lee Bobker**, has been nominated for a national Emmy for Outstanding Historical Programming.

On the festival circuit, **Lynn Hershman**'s *Recovered Diary* was selected for a special award at Locarno this fall, and *Virtual Voices* won a special prize at the KZM in Karlsruhe, Germany. Lynn received a Creativity grant by the CICV to edit with Elaine Trotter on D1 a new piece called *Seduction of a Cyborg*.

Both **Jayce Salloum** and **Alonzo Rico Speight** received media fellowships of $7,000 from the New York Foundation for the Arts.

Beautiful Piggies, a powerful first documentary from **Barbara Bader**, received a Bronze Apple at the 1994 National Educational Film & Video Festival. The half-hour video also was honored at the Atlanta Film and Video Festival.

Luis Argueta's *The Silence of Neto* was awarded a Jury's Special Prize at the Biarritz Film Festival.

The filmmaking duo of **Dorne Pentes** and **Wendy Fishman**, who formed Crescent Pictures in 1991, had their first feature, *The Great Unpleasantness*, picked up for distribution at Cannes by Grand Visions.

Works by AIVF members selected to screen at the Mannhei Heidelberg Festival include **Deidre Fishel**'s *Risk* and **Jerry Aronson**'s *Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg*.

David Sutherland was invited to screen his film *Out of Sight* at the Melbourne International Film Festival.

The 32nds Ann Arbor Film Festival Tour this year included works by **Marina McDougall** (*If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now*); **Greg Buyalos** (*On the Weave of Construction*); **Ahrin Mishan** and **Nick Rothenberg** (*Bui Doi, Life Like Dust*); and **Rosyln Broder** (*Siren*).

Ralph Arlyck's *Current Events* was screened at Lincoln Center as part of the New York State Council on the Arts' "Set in Motion" celebration.

Matthew Harrison recently completed a new feature, *Rhythm Thief*, which debuted last June in Easthampton.

A most prolific member, **Van McElwee**, had his work shown at ARS Electronica, Athens International Video Festival, Melbourne Film Festival, Rio Cinefestival, and shows in Hamburg and Vienna.

Robert Richter's *The Cronkite Report, Out of Space: Can We Afford to Go?* aired last June on The Discovery Channel.

The 4th Green Field, produced and directed by **Margaret Bruen**, was recently screened at Loews Village Theater VII in Manhattan.

Jeffery C. Wray's *August* debuted earlier this year at the Reel Black Film Conference in Cleveland, OH.

Several West Coast members had short video works featured in *TV at Large*, a 90-min. show of experimental comedies, docs, dramas, animation and art, which was held at the John Anson Ford Amphitheater in Sept. Among them are **James Duesing, Jeanne Finely**, and **Eric Saks**.

Frank Chindamo is one lucky member. After making short comedy films for years, he now has his own show, *Small Doses*, for Comedy Central Network. The show features a collection of short sketches and films that he directed.

Filmmaking couple **James Tucker** and **Patricia Duff Tucker** have finished their first feature, *Kane & Abel*. The film debuted at this year's Pan African Film Festival.

Victor/Harder Productions recently created a video curriculum for the Peace Program, a divorce education project developed at New York's Hofstra University. The project will eventually include a series of five videos, each focusing on a different aspect of divorce. **Fran Victor** is producing and directing. **Bill Harder** is coproducing, lighting, and shooting.

Apologies for misspelling member **Mark Gasper**'s name in the last Memberabilia column. Mark's *An Empty Bed* won Best Dramatic Feature at the Upland Main Street Film Festival.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ITVS WORKSHOP IN COLORADO

AIVF is sponsoring an ITVS workshop in Colorado this month, which will focus on the new funding initiative, Independent Television '95, a call for single programs on television. Guidelines are currently available. A postcard to CO members of AIVF and to the ITVS mailing list from CA was sent in Nov., lising date, time & location. Contact: Diane Markrow/AIVF (303) 449-7125 or Sheryl Mousley/ITVS (612) 225-9035.

Watch the Jan./Feb. issue for winter events: Meet and Greets with the Sydney Film Festival, the Raindance Market, and the Jerome Foundation, plus a full schedule of workshops, meetings, new salons, and other special events. Happy holidays!

THE REAL DEAL: SUNDANCE

Sundance is without a doubt the single most important festival now for American independents—but it's all too easy to wander around dazed and confused, especially if it's your first time there. **Kevin Smith** and **Scott Mosier**, the producer/directors of *Clerks*, co-winner of Sundance's 1994 Filmmakers Trophy, will pass along the advice they wish someone had told them before they went last year. Not to be missed—reserve early. *Limited to 20 participants; pre-payment required.*

When: Thursday, January 12, 6:30 pm
Where: AIVF offices
Price: $8 AIVF members; $10 others

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note:* since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Chicago:
When: December 13, January 10, 7:30 pm
Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division St.
Contact: Kirk Pennak (312) 275-5326

Denver:
Meeting not set at press time.
Contact: Thom Cuttita (303) 989-6466

Los Angeles:
When: December 7, January 4, 7 pm
Where: Lou de Chris Cafe, 8164 Melrose (beside Improv)
Contact: Paris Poirier (310) 392-1239

New York:
When: December 20, January 17, 6-8 pm
Where: The back room at Telephone Bar, 149 2nd Avenue (9th St.)
Contact: Jennifer Lytton (212) 473-3400

Washington, DC:
Meeting not set at press time.
Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons in Austin and Dallas, TX, Stamford, CT, Durham, NC, Kansas City, MO and Phoenix, AZ! For specific information on where and when, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

CALIFORNIA HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE

CIGNA has announced a new open enrollment period for AIVF members residing in California; *all applicants will be accepted regardless of medical history.* Coverage may begin January 1, February 1, or March 1, 1995, as the member prefers; applications are available now, but must be **postmarked no later than January 30, 1995** to be accepted.

Members may choose between an HMO and a combination plan that allows you to go outside the HMO network. To receive specific information and an application, contact TEIGET at (212) 758-5675/ (800) 886-7504. Their address is 845 3rd Ave., NY, NY 10022.

MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York on September 18, 1994. In attendance were Debra Zimmerman (chair), Robert Richter (president), Loni Ding (vice president), James Klein (treasurer), Bart Weiss (secretary), Diane Markrow, Beni Matias, Barbara Hammer, Melissa Burch, Robb Moss, and Ruby Lerner (ex officio). Absent were Joe Berlinger, James Schamus, and Norman Wang.

Executive Director Ruby Lerner reported that she has been invited to observe meetings of the President's Commission on the Arts and Humanities, which oversees the NEA and the NEH policy committees; in addition, she has been elected to the PBS Program Policy Committee.

Michele Shapiro, managing editor of *The Independent*, announced that beginning with the magazine's January issue, classified advertising rates will be restructured, with a $35 general rate and a discounted rate of $25 for AIVF members. Also beginning in January, the newsstand price of the magazine will be increased from $3.50 to $3.75.

The board compared the counts of weighted and non-weighted votes in this year's election. In this election, non-weighted voting would not have affected the final results in terms of board members elected, although the order of the alternates would have been reversed. The board directed the staff to continue to make a comparison of the ballot counts for three years, at which point the board will discuss whether to recommend amending the bylaws to a non-weighted voting system.

The board created two task forces: one to evaluate FIVF's festival bureau, and the other to examine the organization's role as an information provider to the field. These task forces will be composed of board members and other participants from the community, and will meet and develop recommendations for action.

The next board of directors meeting will be Sunday, January 15, 1995.

MEMBERABILIA

Among the recipients of the 1994 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowships are **Patricia Aufderheide**, **Lourdes Portillo**, and **Abraham Ravett**, all AIVF members. Congrats!

The Other Side of the Fence, produced and directed by **Lynn Estomin**, has won awards at the American Film Institute College Film Festival (Best Female Filmmaker and Best Local Interest Film); National Educational Film & Video Festival (Bronze Apple); Rochester International Independent Film Festival (Honorable Mention); and the Big Muddy Film Festival (Honorable Mention/Best of Fest). The film is distributed by Filmmaker's Library. Estomin recently received an Arts Matters, Inc. Fellowship and a Kodak Photographic Educator's Grant.

Out of 174 entries from the US, Canada, and Mexico, four Awards of Excellence were presented in the 7th annual National Fine Arts Video Competition. One went to AIVF member **David Liban** of Brooklyn College in NY. Congrats!

Melissa Wolf and **Paul Lamarre** have been awarded a grant from Artslink/Citizen Exchange Council to continue a video project in Russia. *The Starving Artist's Cookbook* will travel to Moscow and St. Petersburg and videotape artists there.

Michael Kohan of Sherman Oaks, CA received a media travel grant through the Travel Grants Fund for Artists, sponsored by the NEA and the Institute of International Education.

Dayna Goldfine and **Dan Geller**'s *Frosh: Nine Months in a Freshman Dorm* received a Gold Apple from the 1994 National Educational Film and Video Festival. The film was recently picked up for

Continued on p. 55

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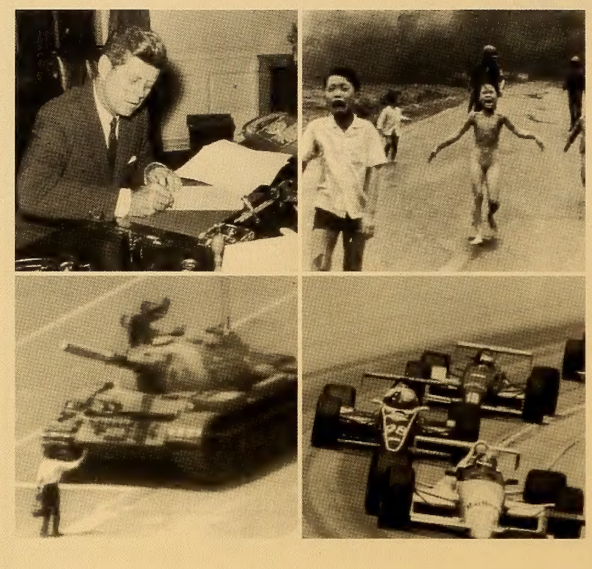
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